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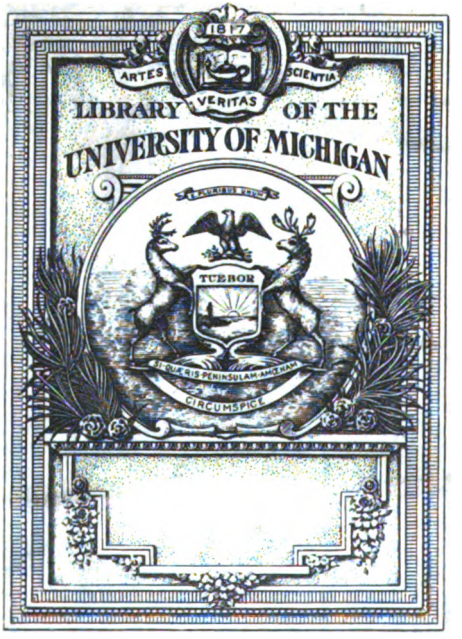

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THE Morning-Exercise AT CRIPPLE-GATE:

OR,

Several Cases of Conscience Practically Resolved, by sundry Ministers,

September, 1661.

Annesley, Samuel, 1620?-1696

——*Commending our selves to every mans Conscience in the sight of God*, 2 Cor. 4. 2.

Unicuiq; est liber sua conscientia, & ad hunc librum discutiendum & emendandum omnes alii inventi sunt.

Bernard. *de Inter. Dom.* p. 1072. c. 28.

Οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἅπως ἔστε μάρτυς ἐστὶ φοβερὸς, ἔστε κατήγορος δεινὸς, ὡς ἡ σύνεσις ἡ ἐγκατοικοῦσα ταῖς ἑκάστων ψυχαῖς. Polyb. Frag. p. 1029.

The Third Edition.

LONDON,
Printed by *T. Milbourn*, for *Joshua Johnson*, to be sold by *Edw. Brewster* at the *Crane*, and *Nevil Simmons* at the *Princes-Armes* in St. *Pauls* Church-Yard, *Tho. Parkhurst* at the *Bible* and *Three Crowns* in *Cheapside*, and by *Robert Boulter* at the *Turks-Head* over against the *Royal Exchange*, 1671.

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Jappan Presbyterian Assoc'n.
qt.
4-16-1923

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To my most unfeignedly *Beloved* Parishioners of St. GILES *Cripplegate.*

My Dear Friends,

THese *Sermons*, both *preached* and *printed*, are the meer product of love to your *Souls.* I never yet (that I remember) went thorow the *Parish* without *some* (though not *sutably compassionate*) heart-aking *yearnings* towards my *charge*, to think (and oh that I could think of it according to the *worth* of *Souls*) how many *thousands* here are *posting* to Eternity, that within a few years will be in *Heaven* or *Hell*, and I know not how, so much as to *ask* them *whither* they are *going.* While God continues me your *Watchman*, I shall affectionately desire, and solicitously endeavour to keep my self *pure from the blood of all men*, and that not only for the saving of my own Soul, by delivering my Message; but that you also may be saved by entertaining it. I am willing therefore to commend unto you some *legible* provocations to *serious* Piety, and therefore have procured a *contribution* of help, that *in the multitude of* Spiritual *Counsellors* your Souls may have *safety.* In short, my Brethren give me leave to say, that

Acts 20. 26.

Prov. 11. 14.

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if I had but the *Apoſtles* Graces to help me in the *manner*, *I* can (without boaſting) at preſent uſe the *matter* of his Spiritually-paſſionate expreſſions; That *I greatly long after you all, in the bowels of Jeſus Chriſt. And this I pray, that your love* to truth and holineſs *may abound yet more, and more, in* ſaving *knowledge, and in all* ſound *judgement. That you may* practically *approve things that are excellent*; and *that you may be ſincerely* gracious, and univerſally *without offence till the day of Chriſt.* That you may be *filled with the fruits of righteouſneſs, which are by Jeſus Chriſt unto the glory and praiſe of God.* Theſe (my Beloved) *are and ſhall* be (through Grace) the *conſtant* deſires and *reſtleſs* endeavours of

Phil. 1. 8, 9, 10, 11.

Novemb. 14. 1661.

Your moſt Affectionate Soul-Servant,

Samuel Anneſley.

THE

The names of y^e Ministers, &

The CASES Resolved.

Sermon 1. *How may we be universally and exactly conscientious?* Acts 24. 16. Page 1.

Sermon 2. *What must and can Persons do towards their own Conversion?* Ezek. 18. 32. p. 33

Serm. 3. *How may beloved lusts be discovered and mortified?* Mat. 5. 29, 30. p. 47

Serm. 4. *What Relapses are inconsistent with Grace?* Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6. p. 72

Serm. 5. *How may we be so spiritual, as to check sin in the first rising of it?* Gal. 5. 16. p. 91

Serm. 6. *How Ministers or Christian friends may, and ought to apply themselves to sick persons, for their good, and the discharge of their own Conscience?* Job 33. 23, 24. p. 117

Serm. 7. *How must we reprove, that we may not partake of other mens sins?* 1 Tim. 5. 22. p. 129

Serm. 8. *What means may be used towards the conversion of our carnal Relations?* Rom. 10. 1. p. 155

Serm. 9. *What are the Characters of a Souls sincere love to Christ? and how may that love to him be kindled and inflamed?* Eph. 6. 24. p. 186

Serm. 10. *Wherein lies that exact Righteousness, which is required between man and man?* Mat. 7. 12. p. 216

Serm. 11. *After what manner must we give Alms, that they may be acceptable and pleasing unto God?* 1 Tim. 6. 17, 18, 19. p. 240

Serm. 12. *If we must aime at Assurance, what should they do, that are not able to discern their own spiritual condition?* 1 Joh. 5. 13. p. 279

Serm. 13. *What difference is there between the conflict in Natural and Spiritual Persons?* Rom. 7. 23. p 315

Serm. 14. *What faith is that, which except we have in prayer, we must not think to obtain any thing of God?* Jam. 1. 6. p. 326

Serm. 15. *Of the cause of Inward Trouble, and how a Christian should behave himself when inward and outward Troubles meet?* Gen. 42. 21, 22. p. 343

Serm. 16.

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Serm. 16. *In what things must we use moderation, and in what not?* Phil. 4. 5. p. 373
Serm. 17. *How may we have suitable conceptions of God in duty?* Gen. 18. 27, p. 407
Serm. 18. *How are we to live by faith on Divine Providence?* Psalm. 62. 8. p. 418
Serm. 19. *How may we cure distractions in holy duties?* Mat. 15. 7, 8. p. 453
Serm. 20. *How must we in all things give thanks?* 1 Thes. 5. 18. p. 470
Serm. 21. *How may we get rid of Spiritual Sloth, and know when our activity in duty is from the Spirit of God?* Psal. 119. 37. ult. p. 491
Serm. 22. *Wherein are we endangered by things lawful?* Luk. 17. 27, 28. p. 515
Serm. 23. *How must we make Religion our business?* Luk. 2. 49. p. 526
Serm. 24. *Whether well-composed Religious Vows do not exceedingly promote Religion?* Psal. 116. 12, 14. p. 540
Serm. 25 *How are we compleat in Christ?* Col. 3. 11, ult. p. 565
Serm. 26. *How shall those Merchants keep up the life of Religion, who while at home enjoyed all Gospel-Ordinances, and when abroad are not only destitute of them, but exposed to persecution?* Psal. 120. 5. p. 585
Serm. 27. *How is Hypocrisie discoverable and curable?* Luke 12, 1. p. 609
Serm. 28. *What must Christians do that the influence of the Ordinances may abide upon them?* 1 Chron. 29. 18. p. 631

HOW

How may we be universally and exactly Conscientious?

ACTS 24. 16.

And herein do I exercise my self, to have allwayes a Conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.

THis Sermon is but *preliminary* to some *select* cases of *Conscience*. And in this Text you have a notable *Anatomy* of Conscience, wherein are these six things singularly considerable:

1. Here's the *Index* to the book of Conscience; The *Eye* to the *portrayture* of a Christian, that according to your several standings, looks upon the *Business*, the *Time*, the *Manner*, and the *Cause* of this account.

Herein a] in *this*, i. e. in this *business* b q. d. here I am arraign'd as a Malefactour, charged with Sedition, Schism, and Heresie, in this my Conscience acquits me. *Herein do I exercise*, &c. Again,

Herein] in or *at* this *time* c, q. d. 'Tis but five dayes agoe, since I was slapt in the mouth for this defence, and I see those present, that so rashly, and illegally censured me, yet now before more equall Judges, I bring the same defence. *Herein I exercise my self*, &c. Again,

Herein] in this *manner* d, q. d. *My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own Nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews, which knew me from the beginning (if they would testifie) that I lived after the straitest sect of our Religion* e: And I am not conscious to my self of any crime in respect of their Law, either in my *Judaism*, or *Christianity* f: or thus,

Herein] q. d. *I have hope towards God* —— *that there shall be a Resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust; and therefore with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of mans judgement: yea, I judge not mine own self, for I know nothing by my self, yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord* h. And therefore having an eye to the resurrection, and last judgment i, *I exercise my self to have*, &c.

a Ἐν τούτῳ.
b *In hoc* vulg. Erasm.
c *Interea*, Bez. i.e. ἐν τούτῳ χρόνῳ De Dieu.
d Æthiopic. *sic.*
i.e. ἐν τούτῳ τρόπῳ De Dieu.
e Acts 26.4,5.
f *Tirin. in* Acts 23. 1.
g Syr. Arab. *propterea. Sid.* Hiero. De Dieu. verse 15.
h 1 Cor. 4.3,4.
i *Propter hoc* i e *propter hanc fiduciam.* Grotius.

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2. Here's the *Act* with the *quality* included, [*I exerciſe* k] I am muſing, and exerciſing my mind: I am learning and buſying my thoughts; the word alſo notes induſtry, and endeavour; pains and labour *l*, q. d. this is my meditation, my ſtudy, my work and employment to *get*, to *keep*, and *uſe*, a Conſcience void of offence, *&c.*

3. Conſider the *Subject* of this exerciſe [*my ſelf* m] 'twas himſelf, not only his hearers; he took on him the *care of all the Churches*, but he would not have it charged upon him; that he kept others Vineyards and neglected his own *n*: he would be ſure ſo to exerciſe himſelf, that he might not by any means, *when he had preached to others, himſelf be a caſt away o.*

4. Conſider the *Object* of this exerciſe, and that is [*Conſcience*] and *p* pray conſider the manner of expreſſing himſelf [*to have a Conſcience*] to be owner of a good Conſcience *q*: All men have a Conſcience, but we may ſay of moſt, Conſcience hath them: they have a *Conſcience*, as they have a *Feaver*, or *a* diſeaſe; Conſcience is troubleſome and diſquiets them, they can not ſin ſo freely, as if they had no inward gripes, and therefore they had rather be rid of their Conſciences, than be thus troubled with them. But now the Apoſtle he would have a Conſcience to commune with, he would do nothing but what he is willing his Deputy-Judge ſhall approve of.

5. Conſider the *quality* of the Subject [*void of offences* r] i. e. without any thing which will not endure the ſcrutiny of both divine and humane judgement *s*. The diſtribution notes the entireneſs, exactneſs, and excellency of his Goſpel-carriage, in his *Religion* towards God, and in his *Converſation* among men *t*. He made it his buſineſs to live *purely* before God, and *righteouſly* among men.

6. Conſider the *Continuance* of this exerciſe [*alwaies* w] 'tis not only by fits and ſtarts, when in ſome good mood, or under ſome pangs of conviction; 'tis not only when arreſted by ſickneſs, or affrighted by the apprehenſion of death, but alwaies, at *all times*.

The words thus opened, the General Caſe that lies upon me to reſolve, is this:

Caſe. *How may we be univerſally, and exactly conſcientious?*

Univerſally, in reſpect of *things*; *exactly*, in reſpect of *manner*.

To anſwer this, (ſo far as I can crowd it into a Sermon) I ſhall preſent you with theſe four things. 1. What *Conſcience is*. 2. What it's *Objects*. 3. What it's *Offices*. 4. What are the *Kinds* of Conſciences; Wherein various *directions* are neceſſary, for *remedies* and *rules* which when laid together, will reſolve the Caſe.

Conſcience

k ἀσκῶ *medi-tor*, and ſometimes the ſame with παιδεύω. Budæus.

l *Operam do, elaboraè concinno, orno, colo.* Steph.

m Ἀσκεῖν *utitur Paulus ſignificatione conjugationis. Heb.* Hithpahel. Bez.

n Cantic. 1. 6.

o 1 Cor. 9. 27.

p σωφρόνειν ἔχειν.

q *Rut.* againſt lib. of conſ. p 1

r Ἀπρόσκοπον

ſ Vatab. *in loc.*

t ἡ ἁγιότης γάρ ἀΐδιον ἀρετή. Chryſ. *in loc.*

u Calv. *in loc.*

w Διὰ παντός. i. e. διὰ παντὸς χρόνου. Piſ.

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1. *Conscience is mans Judgment of himself* x, *i. e. of his Estate and Actions* y, *as they are subjected unto the judgment of God.* I therefore close with this description to wave the determination of that School-dispute, whether it be an *Act* z, or an *Habit* a, whether of the *Understanding* b, or *Will* c, or *both* d, whether it be a distinct *Faculty* e, or *Power* f, how far *born* with us, and how far *acquired* g. I willingly let pass all *h*, that doth not further the design I drive at, *viz.* an universal and exact conscientiousness.

For *Conscience*, the Hebrews ordinarily make use of two words, *viz.* [*Heart*] and [*Spirit*] [*Heart*] in Prov. 4. 23. *Keep thy Heart* i, *i. e.* keep thy Conscience *with all diligence*; and so in the New-Testament, 1 *Joh.* 3. 20. *if our Heart* k, *i. e.* if our Conscience *condemn us*, [*Spirit*] in *Prov.* 18. 14 *A wounded Spirit* l, *i. e.* a wounded Conscience *who can bear*, and so in the New Testament, 1 *Cor.* 2. 11. *What man knoweth the things of a man, save the Spirit* m *of man, i. e.* the Conscience of Man *that is in him.* But in English (as also in the Greek *n*, and Latine *o*, whence we borrow it) 'tis called [*Conscience*] knowledge with another, which excellently sets forth the Scriptural nature of it, as Job 16. 19. *My witness is in heaven*, and Rom. 9. 1. *I say the truth——my Conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost.* In both places, q. d. God witnesseth with my Conscience p. Conscience is placed in the middle, *under* God, and *above* man q: I will close this with *Brochmand's* description of Conscience r, to be *a kind of silent reasoning of the Mind, whose definitive sentence is received by some affection of the Heart, whereby those things which are judged to be good and right, are approved of with delight, but those things which are evil and naught, are disapproved with grief and sorrow, God hath placed this in all men, partly to be a judgment and testimony of that integrity to which man was at first created, and of that corruption that followed sin; partly that God may have a Tribunal erected in the breasts of men to accuse delinquents, and to excuse those that do what is good and right.*

The Description.

x *Amesius de conscient.* l. 1. c. 1. p. 1

y *Voet.* Sel. disp. par. 3. p. 827

z *Durand.* l. 2. dist. 39. p. 441 *Aquin.* 1. qu. 79 art. 13 p. 147

a *Sanderson de obligat. conscient. prel.* 1. Sect. 17. p. 21

b *Pleriq; referunt ad intellectum. Rald. cases conscient.* l. 1. c. 3. p. 5

c *Ibidem*

d *Bresse. de conscient.* l. 1 c. 6 p. 23

e Mr. *Bernard.* his Treatise of Consc. p. 4.

f *Huit* upon Consc. p. 87.

g *Sand. ib.* p. 23

h *Imprimis observandum est, tantam esse virium mentis nempe potentiarum, habituum, & actuum, inter se naturæ cognationem, tam-*

que artam quoad usum & exercitium conjunctionem, sive connexionem, ut non solùm vocabulorum appellationes, sed & reales singulorum proprietates, & officia, reliquis promiscuè & indiscriminatim attribui soleant; idque non in exotericis tantum poetarum, oratorum, aliorumque humaniorîs literaturæ authorum, (quibus licentiùs loqui permissum est) sed & in dogmaticis Philosophorum & Scholasticorum scriptis——Idem eodem p. 9. and in the last Paragraph of that Lecture, *absolvi tandem——certe obscuriùs quam aut voluissem, aut debuisse, si res aliter tulisset——Profectò intricata est & perplexa omnis (quod viri gravissimi jam olim conquesti sunt) de animæ intellectivæ potentiis & facultatibus disquisitio——quæ capere se putant, & quidem suo modo capiunt illiteratissimi quique homunciones; hæc ipsa non capiunt acutissimi philosophi——quâ in re neque satis admirari Dei Opt. Max. infinitam Sapientiam, retundentis hoc pacto humanam superbiam, & repræsentantis mortalibus, velut in speculo, inanem illam φαντασιοφρεσυνην, quæ sibi videntur aliquid esse, cum nihil sint, misere decipientes cor suum——p. 35, 36.*

i לב cor tuum. k καρδία. l רוח m πνευμα. n συνείδησις. o Conscientia. p *Sanderson ibidem, & postea sparsim:* q *Perkins* Vol. 2. l. 1. p. 11. r *Brochmand.* T. 1. Art. 1. c. 3. q. 2. p. 7.

2. The *Object* of Conscience is very *various*, Conscience hath great *employment*, and much *business* with the whole man, and with all his *actions*, 'tis like those living Creatures in the *Revelation* all over eyes; it looks to the *Understanding* t; whether our wisdom be carnal or gracious; to the *Will* u, whether it go beyond, or fall short in ability of good performances; to the *Affections* x, whether the entertainment or refusal of the Gospel be the matter of greatest joy or sorrow. It pries into all our *Actions* both towards *God* and *man*. Towards *God*, whether in *general* our *estate* be *good* y; in *special*, whether our *service* be inward and *z Spiritual*, or only outward *a* and *formal*. More particularly, it surveys all our duties, whether we *pray* in faith *b*; whether we *hear* with profit *c*; whether through our *Baptism*, we can go unto God as unto an *Oracle* d; whether in the Lords Supper we have singular *Communion* with Christ *e*; in short, whether we *do* and *will* stick close to *Religion* *f*; as knowing, that if *Conscience* do not steer right, Religion will be *Shipwrackt* g. Thus duties towards *God* are the *great* object of Conscience, but duties towards *man* are the *Secundary*, and like unto it. Towards man in our *whole* conversation *h*. Particularly, that we be *obedient* to Rulers *i*, (and that which is in one place charged upon us for *Conscience* sake, is in another place commanded for the Lords sake *k*) in short, that we be *just* in all our dealings *l*, avoiding all justly offensive things *m*, words *n*, thoughts *o*, that we express singular charity *p*; especially to souls *q*, and this in prayer *r*, when we can do nothing else, and Conscience doth not only do all this at *present* urging to duty, or shooting or tingling under the commission of sin, but it foresees things *future*, provoking to good, and cautioning against evil; and also looks *back* upon things past with joy or torment, so that it is easier to reckon what is not the object of conscience, than what is; in a word, *Every thing of duty and sin is the object of Conscience.*

3. The *Offices* of Conscience are likewise *various*. In *General*, the *proper* Office of Conscience is *discursively* to apply that light which is in the mind unto particular actions, or cases. The light which is in the mind is either the light of *Nature*, or the light of *Divine Revelation*. By the light of *Nature*, I understand those common *notions*, which are written in the hearts of men, which (as a brand pluckt out of the common burning) are the reliques of the Image of God after the fall. Not only Scripture, but experience evidenceth, that those which are practical Atheists, *that say unto God, depart from us* f, *we desire not the knowledge of thy waies*, yet cannot get rid of his Deputy, their Conscience: they carry a Spy, a Register, a Monitor in their bosome, that doth accuse and trouble

f Mr. *Bernard of consc.* p. 56. *& seqq.*
t 2 Cor. 1 12.
u Rom. 7. 18.
x Rom 9.1,2.
y Heb. 9. 14.
z 2 Tim. 1 3
a Heb. 9. 9.
b Heb. 10. 22.
c 1 Tim 3, 9.
d 1 Pet. 3. 21. *Interp.* 72. *vocabulo* ἐπερώτημα *usurpatur quando in V. T. Israelitæ dicuntur interrogare os Domini—— baptismus est ἐπερώτημα—— responsio bonæ conscientiæ, & etiam interrogatio apud Deum, quia audet cum fiducia, deum accedere & interrogare, hoc est cum eo colloqui cumq; rogare pro se & aliis.* Gerhard l. c. T 4. *de Sacram* p. 180 § 88.
e 1 Cor. 10. 15, 16. *f* 1 Pet. 3. 15, 16.
g 1 Tim 1. 19.
h Acts 23. 1.
i Rom. 13. 5.
k 1 Pet. 2. 13.
l Heb. 13. 18.
m 1 Cor. 10. 29.
n 1 King. 2. 44.
o Psa. 73. 15, 16
p 1 Tim. 1. 5
q Rom. 9. 1, 2.
r 2 Tim. 1. 3, 4.
s Job 21. 14, 15

trouble them, they cannot ſin in quiet *t*. Thoſe that are *without* or *Reject* the Sun ſhine of Scripture, yet they cannot blow out Gods *Candle* u of Conſcience. By *Divine revelation* I mean both the ſtanding rule of Scripture*, and Gods extraordinary *x* diſcoveries of himſelf, whether by dreams or viſions, or Propheſies, or other Spiritual communications; all which, though (if they be from God) they are according to Scripture *y*; yet the former are afforded upon particular *z* Providences, and the laſt are the univerſal priviledges of particular favourites, *a*: But it is the *Office* of Conſcience to apply all theſe, and that it doth by the diſcourſe of a practical Syllogiſme *b* e. g.

Whoſoever believeth c, (*i. e.* accepteth of Chriſt as Lord *d*, and Saviour) *ſhall be ſaved, but* (may the gracious perſon ſay) *I accept of Chriſt as Lord and Saviour* e. *Therefore ſhall I be ſaved.*

Or thus. *Whoſoever is unfeignedly willing to have his actions brought to the Scripture touchſtone to be tried, whether they be right for the matter, and to the Scripture Ballance to be weighed, whether they are weight for the manner,* his *deeds are wrought in God, i. e.* he is in a ſtate of Grace, he acteth by the gracious aſſiſtance of the Spirit of God *f*.

But (may the trembling ſoul ſay) *I deſire nothing more than to bring my ſelf and all my actions to a Scripture trial* g.

Therefore (he may conclude) *I am in a ſtate of Grace* h, &c.

Once more. *Whoſoever committeth ſin* (*i. e.* makes a trade of Sin) *is of the Devil* (*i. e.* is the Child of the Devil.)

But (may every unregenerate Perſon ſay *k*) *I make a trade of ſin, i. e.* when I am a ſinning I am in my Element, I am where I would be, there is no work ſo pleaſing to me.

Therefore I am the Child of the Devil l, *i. e.* I am in a ſtate of Damnation.

In the (*major* or) firſt propoſition, you have the *dictate* m of Conſcience. In the (*minor* or) ſecond propoſition, you have the *Teſtimony* n of Conſcience, and in the *Concluſion*, you have the *judgment* of Conſcience *o*: In the firſt *the power* of Conſcience is *very great*, ſo great that it can do any thing *but* make evil good *p*, for it can make an *indifferent* action good or evil *q*: and it can make a *good* action evil *r*: therefore in things *neceſſary* it doth ſo bind, that no humane Laws

t *Quod egi in corpore hoc poſt modum importuna cogitatione verſo in mente & multories gravius torqueor in recordatione quam prius captus fueram operis perpetratione.* Bern. *de inter. dom.* c 30 p. 1074.

u Prov. 20.27.

* Isa 8. 20.

x Nu. 12.6,7,8. Heb. 1. 1.

y 1 John 4. 1.

z 2 Chr. 20.14. 1 Kin. 13.20,21. Nu. 24 *per totum.*

a 2 Cor. 12. 2, 3, 4.

b *Sayrus* clav. Reg. l. 1. c. 3. p. 4.

c John 3. 39.

d 1 Cor. 12. 2.

e John 20. 28.

f John 3. 20, 21.

g Pſalm. 139. 23, 24.

h Pſal. 26. 1, 2.

i John 3. 8.

k Rom. 6. 20.

l Rom. 6. 16.

m *Habitualis cognitio mentis impreſſa, variè ab auctoribus nuncupatur, ut, conſcientia, conſcientiæ dictamen, lex naturalis, ſcintilla rationis, συνδήρησις, &c.* Eſtius in 2. l. Sent. diſtinct. 39. § 2. p. 427; n *conſcientia reſpectu propoſitionis, dicitur lumen & lex; reſpectu aſſumptionis & concluſionis, teſtis; ſed reſpectu aſſumptionis aptiſſimè vocatur index vel liber; & reſpectu concluſionis maximè proprie judex.* Ames. de conſcien. l. 1. c. 1. p. 3. § 9. o *Propoſitionem dicitur συνδήρησις. Aſſumptio per appropriationem vocatur συνείδησις. concluſio eſt ipſa κρίσις.* Ibidem § 10. p. Ibidem *Theſes Theol. de Conſ.* p. 44. § 18. q r Martinius de verb. conſ.

can looſen *s*, and thereupon we are ſaid to be down-right *debtors* t, engaged *ſervants* u, ſpiritually *bound* †, lovingly *conſtrained* x, graciouſly *neceſſitated* y; Yea, in a word, we can do no other (unleſs we will offer violence to our Conſciences) then do what God chargeth upon us as duty *z*. Thus far the *dictate* of Conſcience, in the *Teſtimony* of Conſcience, Conſcience examines, ſifts, and tries our actions; this in Scripture is called a *returning* into a mans own heart *a*, a *thinking* of our waies *b*, a *ſpeaking* to our heart *c*, a *laying* things to heart *d*, a *ſetting* our heart upon a buſineſs *e*, an *examination* and trial of our ſelves *f*; and thence the concluſion is inferred from the premiſſes according to our apprehenſion of the rule and account of our actions. Yet this is worthy of *ſpecial* obſervation, that though both the premiſſes be *undeniably* true, yet there's nothing more *ordinary*, then for not only wicked *g*, but gracious perſons (though upon different grounds) to deny the *concluſion*: and the truth is, without the Spirits aſſiſtance by way of *conviction* to the wicked, and *relief* to the godly, neither of them will prove any better *Logicians*, than ſtill to deny the *concluſion*. Graceleſs perſons they will not conclude againſt themſelves: For, 1. They will not weigh the *cogency* of any Scriptural *h* argument. 2. They have *ſuckt* in other ſelf flattering concluſions *i*: and 3. they are willing to put a *cheat* upon themſelves *k*, ſo theſe will not conclude againſt themſelves. And on the other hand; gracious perſons *dare* not conclude themſelves ſo happy as the Scripture repreſents them. 1. Through the prevalency of *Temptations* l, Satan frights them from their comforts. 2. Through the *abounding* of grace *m*, they think 'tis too good to be true, eſpecially conſidering, 3. their ſence of *unworthineſs* n; what! *they* paſs a ſentence of abſolution upon their ſouls! of approbation upon their actions! No, they dare not, through over-modeſty they'l bely the very Spirit of grace. In ſhort, the only *remedy* I ſhall commend to both ſorts is this, *viz.* Beg of God to perſwade thy heart to cloſe with convincing truth, q. d.

Lord thou haſt told me in the word, that if I come unto Chriſt, I ſhall in no wiſe be caſt o out: and if I love God, I may thereby be ſure that God loves me p.

But Lord, ſo far as I am able by ſearching to know my own Heart, I deſire nothing more than to come q *to Chriſt, to receive Chriſt* r, *to be one*

ſ Acts 4. 19 *Vix crediderim apud ſe fuiſſe* Stapletonum *cum hæc effutiret. Forum conſcientiæ dixit eſſe longè majorem partem clavium.* Cham. Panſt. T. 2. l. 11 c. 9. p. 205. § 23

t Rom. 1. 14

u Rom. 6. 16

† Acts 20. 22

x 2 Cor. 5. 14

y 1 Cor. 9. 16

z Acts 4. 20

a 1 King 8. 47 *& reverſi fuerint ad cor ſuum ex heb.*

b Pſal. 19. 59

c Hoſ. 7. 2.

d Jer. 12. 11 שים על לב *ponens ſuper cor*

e Haggi 1. 5. there 'tis שימו לבבכם על דרכיכם *ponite cor veſtrum ſuper vias veſtras.*

f 2 Cor. 13. 5 there's both περιάζετε (q. d. make as ſtrict a ſcrutiny into your own hearts, as the Devil will do when he tempts you) & δοκιμάζετε (be as loath to be miſtaken in your graces, as a Uſurer in his coyn)

g Rom. 2. 18, 21, 22. *h* Joh. 3. 20. *i* Deut. 29. 19. *k* Jam 1. 22. παραλογιζόμενοι *falſa argumentatione uti & ſubdola ſuppoſitione fallere*, as thoſe in Mat 7. 21, 22, 23. *Broch.* in loc. *l* Rev. 12. 10. The Devil accuſeth them to themſelves, as well as unto God day and night. *m* Pſal. 126. 1. *n* Luke 7. 6, 9.

o Joh. 6. 37.

p 1 Joh. 4. 19.

q Jer. 3. 21.

r Joh. 1. 11.

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one with ſ *Chriſt, to be conformable to Chriſt* t. *And Lord, I dare ſay with* Peter, *thou that knoweſt all things, knoweſt that I love thee;* u *if prizing thee above all things in the world* w, *if reſtleſs longing* x *for further acquaintance, and more inward* y *communion; if pantings after the ſecrets of thy* z *preſence, and fear of nothing more than to offend thee* a, *be infallible evidences of ſincere love, then I dare appeal unto thee, that I love thee.*

Therefore Lord perſwade my ſoul thankfully to acknowledg, that 'tis in a ſafe condition. On the contrary, Thus:

Lord thou haſt told me, that if I live after the fleſh, I ſhall b *die.*

But my heart & life undeniably evidence, that I mind nothing but carnality:

Therefore Lord convince me, that there's but a ſtep c, *but a* d *breath between me and everlaſting death.*

Thus Chriſtians, do but *ſuffer* and *help* your Conſcience to do its *office*, and then *ſhall you have rejoycing in your ſelves alone, and not in* e *another, i. e.* you will find cauſe of rejoycing in the teſtimony of your own Conſcience, and not in others thinking you to be better than you are, nor in your thinking your ſelves to be better than others. Thus you have the *Offices* of Conſcience. I come in the laſt place to ſpeak of

4. The *kinds* of Conſcience I know are commonly reduced to theſe four, *viz. Good and quiet; Good and troubled. Evil and quiet; Evil and troubled.* But intending the reſolution of the *Caſe* before me in ſpeaking to Conſcience under the ſeveral *kinds* of it; I ſhall ſpeak to eight kinds of Conſciences. The two firſt, *viz.* the *ſleepy* and the *ſeared* Conſcience are peculiar to the worſt of men. The four next, *viz.* the *erring, doubting, ſcrupulous* and *trembling* Conſciences, are almoſt indifferent to good and bad; only the two former have a greater *byas* to bad: and the two latter have a greater *tendency* to Good: but the two laſt kinds, *viz.* The *Good* and *Honeſt*, and the *Good* and *quiet* Conſciences are peculiar to Gods choiceſt favourites. In treating of theſe, I ſhall endeavour to acquaint you with the nature of each *g*, how to cure the evil, and how to obtain the good; and hereby the Application will be entwiſted with the Explication throughout my diſcourſe.

1. The firſt, and one of the worſt kinds of Conſciences in the world, is the *ſleepy Conſcience*; ſuch is the Conſcience of every unconverted perſon (*that is not yet under horrour*) their h *ſpirit, i. e.* their *Conſcience* is aſleep; that as bodily ſleep bindeth up all the ſenſes and animal ſpirits, ſo this ſpiritual (or rather unſpiritual) ſleepineſs, bindeth up the

ſ Gal. 2. 20
t Heb. 2. 11
u Joh. 21. 17
w Pſal. 73. 25.
x Pſal. 119. 20
y Pſal. 106. 4
z Pſal. 25. 14
a Pſal. 119. 120
b Rom. 8. 13
c Job 21. 13
d Pſal. 146. 4
e Gal. 6. 4
f Bern. de conſc. p. 1107.
g But here I muſt ſay with Aug. *Non poſſum ut volo explicare quod ſentio: tamen quid moliar dicere, peto ut non expectatis verbis meis ſagaciſſime ſi poteſtis intelligatis— Odi definire—nam facilius eſt mihi videre in alterius definitione quod non probem, quam quicquam bene definiendo explicare.* Aug. T. 1. l. 2. de Ord. c. 1 2. p. 671.

1. The ſleepy Conſcience.

h Rom. 11. 8. πνευμα κατανύξεως. Ἐξαίζει ἡ φράσις—quaſi πνευμα καταμεμυγμένον. Camerarius in loc.

ſoul,

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ſoul from all ſenſe *i* of the evil of ſin, and want of grace, and therefore in converſion, Chriſt doth awaken *k* the Conſcience. The Diſciples of Chriſt have their ſpirits waking, when their bodies *l* are ſlumbring, *i.e.* they have a gracious *habit* of watchfulneſs, when they are overtaken with ſome carnal *acts* of ſleepineſs. Chriſt complains of unkindneſs *m*, that his Spouſe ſleeps in the morning, when he knocks for early entertainment; but the unconverted let Chriſt ſtand knocking all the day, till ſupper time *n*, they will ſpend their day with their luſts; and if Chriſt will knock and wait till the day of their life be almoſt ſpent, then they'l pretend to open: but how long muſt God call? *How long* o *wilt thou ſleep O ſluggard? when wilt thou ariſe out of thy ſleep?* and they'l anſwer, *Yet* p *a little ſleep, a little ſlumber, a little folding of the hands to ſleep.* The plain truth is, though wicked men cannot quite *ſtifle* their conſciences *q*, yet their Conſciences do but as it were *talk* in their *ſleep*, and they take no more notice of them, then they do of their *dreams*.

i *Privatio omnis ſenſus & judicii.* Illyr. *in prad. loc.*
k Ephe. 5. 14.
l Mat. 26. 41.
m Cant. 5. 2.
n Rev. 3. 20.
o Prov. 6 9, 10
p *Conceſſio ironica ethopeiam habens pigrorum elegantiſſimam.* Jun. in loc.
q *Videmus conſcientiam velati veterno aut lethargo aliquam diu ſepultam,* &c. Epiſc. Inſt. theol l. 1. c. 3. p. 11.

Cauſes of a *ſleepy* Conſcience are (beſides the ſluggiſhneſs of our depraved natures)

Cauſes.

1. A ſpiritual *intoxication*, all unconverted perſons are *drunk* with the *love* of ſin, and therein behave themſelves like *Solomons* r drunkard that lies down to ſleep in the *heart* of the ſea, or upon the top of a *maſt*, in the very midſt of the greateſt *ſoul danger*: He doth that daily which *Jonah* did once, run away from God, and then compoſeth himſelf to ſleep, *ſ* when God is purſuing him with judgments; and dreams of nothing but impunity, and happineſs. Love of ſin is the Devils *Opium* whereby he caſts the Conſcience into a dead ſleep, that no arm but of Omnipotency can waken it. He meets with ſomething in the world, which he likes better than the holy ways of God, and therefore will not ſeek God *t*, Gods waies are always *grievous to him,——he hath ſaid in his heart I ſhall not be moved——God hath forgotten: he hideth his face, he will never ſee it——he contemns God, and ſaith in his heart, thou wilt not require it.* They wink, and then conclude God doth not ſee them:

r Pro. 23. 34, 35 *Jacet in corona charcheſii*, i. e. *Galea ubi maxima ſetitur maris agitatio.* Jun. in loc. or as the Vulg. *Verſion*, which may ſerve for a paraphraſe, *quaſi ſpiritus gubernator amiſſo clavo* i. *uſu rationis.* Tir
ſ Jonah 1. 5.
t Pſal. 10. 4, 5, 11, 13: *Juſtitiam ut ille apud Platonem Thraſymachus, appellat γενναῖαν εὐήθειαν, elegantem ſtultitiam*—— they ſleep, and then *aiunt deum dormire, aut oblitum eſſe eorum quæ fiant in terris*, &c. Aug. Steuch. Eug. Enar. in loc.

2. *Carnal conceits of grace and heaven.* At the beſt, humane wiſdom is their higheſt *Guide*, their great and ſupream *Oracle*; in their miſhapen apprehenſions of their need of mercy, they are willing to be flattered

tered, that it may be had without such severities in Religion *u*, as they are unwilling to undertake. *Why should they be wiser than their Neighbours? all men are not fools. Men as wise, and as learned, neither press nor practise such strictness; and do you think they have not a care of their souls? they do not doubt but they shall do as well as the best.* Though, poor souls, they know *that wide is the gate, and broad is the way † that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* Mark that, [*that find it*] he doth not say *x* that *enter* into it, but that *find* it. Those that do not walk in the way of holiness *y*, 'tis impossible they should ever find it. The gate doth not lead to the way, but the way to the gate. Do not think to get to Heaven first, and learn heavenly mindedness after; yea, Heaven must not suffer *z* violence; striving is the condition *a* of entering. Rouze up therefore, and shake off your worldly wisdom *b*, your ignorant self-love, your abuse of mercies, your contempt of God, and your forgetfulness of Death and Judgment. But how shall we do this?

u Quàm minutatim & pedetentim declinet à Deo: & ita in profundum descendat, ut super eam urgea puteus os suum mundi prosperitas alludit & illudit, cum laudatur peccator in desideriis animæ suæ, cum peccantium favor & peccare nolentium favor nolens & dolens arridet ei, &c. Bern. l. de conf. p. 1109

† Mat. 7. 13, 14. *x Non dicit pauci ingrediuntur quod difficillium, sed pauci inveniunt.* Par. in loc. *y Vide* Auth. imperfec. oper. Hom. 18. p. 72. *z* Mat. 11. 12. *a* Luk. 13. 24. *vid.* Grell. in loc. *b* See *Abernethy's* Physick for the Soul. c. 7. p. 92, &c.

1. The first Remedy I shall commend, is *Consideration.* Let the subject of thy consideration be what thou wilt, (only I could wish it may relate to eternity, whither thou art posting) and I shall not doubt of the success. Let me for once insert a relation I heard between the preaching and the transcribing of this Sermon. *The Father of a Prodigal left it, as his death-bed charge, unto his only Son, to spend a quarter of an hour every day in retired thinking, but left him at liberty to think of what he would, only engaged him to spend a quarter of an hour in thinking. The Son having this liberty to please himself in the subject, sets himself to the performance of his promise; his thoughts one day recal his past pleasures, another contrive his future delights; but at length his thoughts became inquisitive, what might be his Fathers end in proposing this task: he thought his Father was a wise and good man, therefore surely he intended and hoped that he would sometime or other think of Religion: When this leaven'd his thoughts, they multiplied abundantly, neither could he contain them in so short a confinement, but was that night sleepless, and afterwards restless, till he became seriously religious.* O that I could perswade you to go and do likewise. *Cure.*

2. Observe what *means* thou shunnest as too *startling*, and make use

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of them for thy *awakening*. This, with the blessing of God, will savingly awaken thee. O how often hath thy Conscience *whimper'd*, and thou hast *husht* it to sleep again! What doth thy sleepy Conscience most dread, an awakening *Ministry*? So far cross thy Conscience as to attend no other: Instead of *lullaby* Notions, improve *cutting* * Convictions.

* Tit. 1. 13. ἔλεγχε ἀποτόμως redarguito præcisè. Bez.

Generalis cujusdem religiosi ordinis, qui ut suos hortaretur, neminûs conscientiæ studerent quam scientiæ; dixit majores suos, se vitamque suam direxisse conscientiâ: nunc autem abbreviatam videri verbum istud, ac mutilatum primâ syllabâ, viz. succedente ille scientiâ; verendum coinceps ne & hoc verbum mutiletur primâ syllabâ, adeóque relinquatur sola entia rationis, circa quæ versatur sæpe speculativa tantum scientia, ac nudæ speculationes. Brestel. de consc. l. 1. c. 7. p. 28. Sect. 57.

The Seared Conscience.

II. The *second kind* of Conscience proposed, is, The *seared Conscience*. Such is theirs who have given up their names to Christ, but lift up their heel against him, of which the Apostle speaks *, *having their consciences seared with an hot iron, i. e.* having a corrupt, and † putrified Conscience, that have the Devils *brand mark* * upon it. Plainly, a *seared Conscience*, is a *rotten* †, *venomous, ulcerate, pestilent, filthy, gangrenate Conscience*, that doth not perform any of its Offices, but is even past feeling; that is, (or might have been) in Christ's Hospital, under cure of Soul-distempers: but through indulging of sin, not being able to endure the sharp * convictions, bitter reproofs, and close exhortations of the Word, he deadens his Conscience unto an insensible senslesness; to this rank of profligate sinners, I refer all those that *frequent* (as well as those that *reject*) Ordinances, that *make* a profession (as well as those that *hate* the profession) of Religion, yet have a reserve of sin, which they will not part with. Searing (you know) is of that part which needs cure.

* 1 Tim. 4. 2. † *Corruptam & putrefactam atque putredinem cum fœtore semper emittentem.* Ansel. in loc. * *Cauterio diaboli penetratam esse, ut indelebiliter eandem retineant conscientiam*, &c. Cajet. in loc. † Abern. *ibid.* c. 8. p. 105. * Jer. 44. 16, &c.

Cause.

The *Causes* of a seared Conscience, are, *Conscience-wasting* sins on man's part procuring it, and divine *withdrawing* from the sinner on God's part inflicting it. As there are some * bodily Diseases that follow bodily wickness, so this Soul-disease is the peculiar punishment of sins against knowledge. Methinks that Text is dreadful †: *As they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind*, &c. 'Tis observable *, the oftner they rebelled against the light, the more severely God punished them; with that (which they counted) impunity, *viz.* he gave them up to their swinge † of 1. natural lust,

* *Morbus venereus.* † Rom. 1 28. See also v. 21, 24, 26. * *Ecce quotiens vindicat Deus & ex eadem vindicta plura & graviora peccata consurgunt.* Bed. in loc. † —*Tradidit Deus—subtractione gratiæ—traditione in potestatem Satanæ—sic à Deo mens vitiatur, in mentem reprobam, activè, & passivè intelligendo*, &c. And all this to be such a recompence of their error, *ut ideo quam opportunè, i. e. quam ex ordine justitiæ suæ Deus ipsis de jure habeat retribuere.* Par. in loc.

2. Un-

2. unnatural, and 3. of all unrighteousness. Custom of sinning, takes away Conscience of sinning.

For *Cure*. Seriously set your selves against those *peculiar* wayes of sinning which have brought you to this. You *know* them, there's not any one that hath a *seared* Conscience, but he *doth* (or easily *may*) know how it came so; your work (in some respect) is not so large as in case of the sleepy Conscience, 'tis but one or two sorts of sins that are *eminently* mischievous to your Souls in this case, though a seared Conscience is worse than a sleepy Conscience; yet as it is more easily discernable, so 'tis but reasonable you should more speedily and vigorously set upon the cure, take heed of accounting any sin small *, lest at last you account not any sin great; I will commend one Text to you, and close this particular, *Ezek.* 24. 13, 14. *In thy filthiness is lewdness, because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee: I the Lord have spoken it, it shall come to pass, and I will do it, I will not go back, neither will I spare, neither will I repent, &c.* Sirs, God hath been your *Physitian*, hath used † variety of Remedies: If nothing will prevail, but you will industriously *singe* your Consciences to make them *senseless*, as sure as God is *true*, he will * make you *sensible* of your sin by everlasting burnings. Cure.

I forbear inlargment, because in the following cases about the *Mortification* of beloved lusts, about *relapses*, and how to check the first *risings* of sin, you will have suitable directions to make your brawny Consciences tender. I proceed therefore to those kinds of Consciences, none else will I speak to, *viz.*

* *Cum caperit quis dicere; quid est si verbulum hoc unicum locutus fuero? — Ex hoc, quid id, quid illud — Sensim incipit quis pedetentim in majora & graviora prolabi, & sic dejiceps — in perfectam insensibilitatem decidit — curate levia, quoad levia sunt — & virtutes & peccata à parvis incipiunt*, &c. Dorotheus B. P. T. 4. p. 769. † — *Instar medici, qui putridis non parcit carnibus — non parcit, ut parcat: crudelis est, ut misereatur.* Hieron. in loc. * My fury to rest] i. e. *Non habeat, quod amplius faciat*, &c. Sanctius in loc.

III. *An erring Conscience* * is that *which judgeth otherwise than the thing is*. Conscience is sometimes deceived through *ignorance* † of what is *right*, by apprehending a false rule for a true, an error for the Will of God: Sometimes through *ignorance* of the *fact*, by misapplying a right rule to a wrong action; Conscience evil informed, takes humane traditions, and false doctrines, proposed under the shew of divine Authority to be the Will of God: a famous instance you have of this in *Jeroboams* * case, he fears that if the people should go up to sacrifice at *Jerusalem*, then he should lose his Kingdom; this puts him upon enquiry, whether there should not be a double *Sanctuary*, as well as a double *Kingdom*? hereupon The Erring Conscience.

* *Amesius de conscient. l. 1. c. 4. p. 8.* * Dickson *Therap. Sac. l. 1. c. 1. p. 3. sect. 18.* * Bergius. *Prax. cath. disput. 3. p. 244. sect. 27.*

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hereupon a Council is called, flattering Prophets come, they have dreams and visions, worthy of their affections, suitable to their purpose: A decree is made, *q. d.* 'tis sufficient that you have hitherto gone up to *Jerusalem*, now behold your gods, these Calves are like the Cherubims of the Sanctuary, which are as ministring Spirits before the face of God. (That these Calves had the shape of the Cherubims, you may gather by comparing of Scriptures, that which is called the face of an † *Oxe* in one place, is called the face of a * *Cherub* in the other). This seems to the people a satisfying warrant for them readily † to *follow* the Kings *Commandment*. I might add another instance of the good old Prophet, who was *plausibly* seduced to his bodily * destruction. Now 'tis a great question (among the *Papists* especially) *whether, and how far an erring Conscience binds?* One of their most learned *Casuists* that I meet with, peremptorily determines, that the Law of an erring Conscience is not dispensable by † God himself: Others *, that 'tis good to follow an erring Conscience, when it hath the credit of a good Conscience, and is agreeable to reason. *Others* x that a right, and an erronious Conscience, both bind, though in a different respect; a right Conscience, as it is *conformable* to the Law of God; an erring Conscience, as it is thought to be the Law of God; a right Conscience binds *simply*, an erronious upon a *supposition*. *Some* distinguish ignorance into *y* vincible and invincible, and say, That when an *erronious Conscience*, through invincible ignorance, judgeth that to be honest which is not so, yet that judgement is the next rule which the will is to follow. *Others* distinguish (where all men are not able to discern the difference) between *z binding* and *obliging*. But, in short, *they generally determine the question in the affirmative*; Though some grant, that though *b* we must do nothing against a true Conscience, yet we must depose an erronious one, and go contrary to it. And others *c*, though we must do nothing against Conscience in any case, yet we must not follow Conscience in every case. The plain truth is, *Error* cannot bind us to follow it *d*; an erring Conscience may so bind, that it may be a sin to go against it; but it can never so bind, as it may be a *virtue* to follow it. To follow an erring *e* Conscience, is for the blind sinner to follow his blind Conscience, till both fall into the ditch.

† Ezek. 1. 10. * Ezek. 10. 14. & Ezek. 1. 7. † Hos. 5. 11. * 1 King. 13. 8, 18, 19, 24, 26.

† *Ne quidem à Deo, multo minus ab homine.* Bresser. *de Conf.* l. 5. c. 22. p. 555. sect. 212.

* — *Ut igitur bonum sit agere secundum Conscientiam erroneam voluntariè & vitiosè, oportet existimationem Conscientiæ bonam esse, & cum rectâ ratione congruentem.* Azorius *Mor. Instit.* l. 2. p. 104.

x Sayrus *Clav. Reg.* l. 1. c. 4. p. 8. Sect. 13.

y *Quando Conscientia erronea ex invincibili ignorantia judicat aliquid bonestum esse, quod honestum non est, tunc actus voluntatis, qui conformis est tali judicio, bonus & honestus est, etiamsi contingat objectum esse turpe, ita passim Theologi; & probatur, quia tunc est conformis suæ regulæ, nam illud judicium est proxima regula quam sequi debet voluntas.* Becan. T. 1. *Theol. Schol.* Pt. 2. Tract. 1. c. 4. q. 7. p. 219. z — *Neminem obligat tamen liga* — Durand. lib. 2. dist. 39. q. 5. p. 443. Sect. 7. b Sylvestranus in l. 1. Sent. p. 239. c *Nihil licet contra Conscientiam agere in aliquo casu, nec tamen tenetur quilibet sequi Conscientiam suam in quolibet casu.* Gul. Parisiensis *de vitiis & pec.* p. 280. d *Hurt's* Works, Pt. 4. p. 28. e *Rainf.* Obs. c. 47. p. 216.

The

The violation of Conscience is alwayes evil, and the following of an erring Conscience is evil; but there's a middle way that's safe and good, *viz.* the informing of Conscience better by God's Word, and following of it accordingly.

Causes.

The *Causes* of an erring Conscience (besides Original sin, the effect whereof is blindness in the Understanding. And the just judgment of God upon persons for not entertaining, obeying, and loving the truth, as it is in Jesus, besides these, the causes) are reduceable to these three Heads *.

1. *Negligence of learning the Will of God* †, through slothfulness, and love of ease, and low esteem of the ways of God. I need name but one Scripture for both proof and illustration of this particular, *Eccl.* 4. 5, 6. *The fool folds his hands together, and eateth his own flesh. Better is a handful with quietness, than both the hands full with travel and vexation of Spirit*, q. d. He is a fool that puts himself into a posture of idleness*, that composeth himself to do nothing, that thinks it better to be without good things, than be at some trouble in getting them †.

2. *Pride whereby a man is ashamed to consult others, and to be taught by them* *. Those that are sincerely conscientious, are not free from a kind of *proud modesty*, in being *shie* of making inquiry into practical cases; there's something of pride in their *bashfulness* to discover their ignorance, *in asking of questions for Conscience-sake*. But those that are ungodly, arrogate to much to their own judgement, that (to speak their own boasting) they know as much as any man can teach them. But as wise as they are, a wiser than they calls them *fools*, and their folly misleads them.

3. *Passion, or inordinate affection* * about that whereof we are ignorant. This warpeth our consideration, for *he that seeks truth with a bias, will run counter when he comes near it, and not find it, though he come within kenning of it* †.

You may gather the *Remedies* from the *opposites* to these three causes of error. 1. Be industriously diligent to know your duty. 2. Be humbly willing to receive instruction. And 3. Let not your affections out-run your judgment. But there's *one* rule I shall commend, which if you will *conscientiously* improve, you shall never be *much* hurt by an *erring* Conscience; and I dare appeal to your own Consciences, that 'tis your indispensable duty, you *must* use it, and 'tis so plain and easie you *may* use it.

Cure.

Do what you know, and God will teach you what to do. Do what you know to be your *present* duty, and God will acquaint you with your *future*

* Bresser l. 5. c. 23. p. 556, Sparsim.

† *Discendi negligentia, orta ex pigritia.* Ibid. Sect. 217.

* English Annot. † *Pemble.* in loc.

* — *Pudeat ignorantem malos consulere, & ab iis doceri.* Bres. ibid. † Prov. 28. 26. *Qui suo fidit animo stultus est.* Merc. in loc.

* Bres. *ibid.* & c † Arch Bishop *Laud.* E. Ded. before the relation of the Conference.

future duty as it comes to be *present*. Make it your business to avoid *known omissions*; and God will keep you from *feared commissions*. This *Rule* is of great moment, and therefore I will *charge* it upon you by express Scripture. *Psal.* 25. 4. *Shew me thy ways, O Lord, i.e.* those ways wherein I cannot err *n*. *Teach me thy paths, i.e.* that narrow path which is too commonly unknown *o*, those Commands that are most strict and difficult, V. 5. *Lead me in thy truth, and teach me, i.e.* teach me evidently that I may not be deceived; so teach me, that I may not only know thy will, but do it *p*. Here's his *prayer*, but what grounds hath he so *expect audience*? *For thou art the God of my salvation*, q.d. thou Lord wilt save me, and therefore do not refuse to teach me. *On thee do I wait all the day, i.e.* the whole day, and every day *q*; other Arguments are couched in the following verses, but *what* answer? v. 9. *The meek will he guide in judgment, the meek will he teach his way, i.e.* those that submit their neck to his yoke, those that are not conceited that they can guide themselves better than he can guide them, he will teach them his wayes *r*, in *necessary, great*, and *weighty matters* they shall not *err s*. Again, *Prov.* 2. 3. *If thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding.* v. 4. *If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures.* v. 5. *Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.* v. 6. *For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.* v. 7. *He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.* v. 8. *He keepeth the paths of Judgment, and preserveth the way of his Saints.* v. 9. *Then shalt thou understand Righteousness, and Judgment, and Equity, and every good Path*, q.d. Be but as diligent to get knowledge, as a covetous man is to get money *t*, and God will certainly give you such knowledge of his wayes, as shall preserve you from error *u*, and will teach you how to behave yourselves both towards God and Man *x*: One Scripture more, that in the evidence of three Witnesses, this Rule may be established, *Joh.* 7. 17. *If any man will do his will, he shall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of my self*, q.d. Hinder not your selves from learning truth through fear of error *y*, for you shall never want the Spirits guidance, while you practically follow his conduct *z*.

n *Mandata tua ostende, quæ me non permittant errare*, &c. Remig. in loc.

o *Semita dicta quasi semi via, quia angusto calle dirigitur, nec vulgo nota est, sed occulto itinere ambulatur.* Bruno in loc.

p Remig. *ubi sup.*

q Arnob. in loc.

r *Non est qui præcurrere voluntate, quasi seipsos melius rege possint; sed eos qui non errant ordinem, neque relinquant.* Aug. in loc.

s *Ejusmodi error nunquam accidit, vel certe non permanet; de rebus necessariis, magnis, & gravibus* — Bergius *prax. Cath.* p. 247. Ca. tw. in loc

t — *Dominus clypeus erit iis, qui perfectam, & omnibus suis numeris constantem contemplationis rationem in hisce recondit is divinisque rebus amplecti sint, quo ab erroribus tuti serventur*, &c. Levi Ghetsom. *in loc.* x Eng. Annot. y — *Quam perperam & stulte hodie permulti, dum evandi periculum metuunt, hac trepidatione sese impediant ab omni discendi studio — si Deo toti in obsequium simus addicti, spiritum discretionis ab eo nobis datum ire ne dubitemus qui perpetuus erit dux ac director*, &c. Calv. *in loc.* z Gul. Parisien. *Qui expresse docet — ubi est invincibilis ignorantia quoad hæc, Deus succurret, nisi culpa nostra ejus opem a nobis avertamus — quæ sententia facit maxime ad providentiam Dei celebrandam.* Davenant *determ.* q. 45. p. 213.

IV. A

IV. *A doubting Conscience is that which, with trouble and anxity, suspends* * *its judgment, not knowing which way to determine.* Doubtfulness of Conscience, is that ambiguity of mind which consists in a standing (or rather in a wavering) ballance, neither assenting nor dissenting *b*. To speak strictly, a *doubting c* Conscience is no Conscience, but onely improperly, as a dead man may be said to be a man. Conscience is a *judgment* of something *done*, or *to be done:* but now where there's no *assent*, there's no *judgment c*, but a *privation* of judgement; and therefore so far as it may be called a Conscience, it is an *evil* Conscience, at best *troublesomly d* evil, and therefore ought to be deposed. Some term the acting upon a *doubting* Conscience, to be an acting *besides* e *Conscience*; for they cannot be said to act *according* to Conscience, because 'tis properly none, but *equivocally*; nor do they act *against* Conscience, because Conscience permits them to act thus and no otherwise: those act with or against Conscience, where the judgment of Conscience is determined, to say this is lawful or unlawful, and he acts *besides* Conscience, who remains fluctuating and doubting, whether such a thing be lawful or unlawful, and yet doth, or omits it. Now the Apostle tells us *f*, *Whatsoever is not of Faith is sin.* By Faith there we must understand that *perswasion and security of mind*, whereby we *believe* and *determine*, that such a thing *pleaseth* or *displeaseth* God, is lawful or forbidden; 'tis not spoken of justifying *g* Faith, as if men sinned in eating or not eating, because their sins *were*, or were *not* pardoned; In short, in all Duties that belong to practice, we must be *unwearisedly* diligent to perceive the truth, that doubtfulness may be driven away, for the more *certain* knowledge we have of those things we do, the more *confident* we may be in the doing of them, and the more *joyful* afterwards. What therefore is the cause of doubting, that it may be banished?

The *Causes* of doubting, which I shall speak of briefly, (to say nothing of our ignorance *i* and weakness) are these two.

1. Either *want*, *k* or *equality* of Reasons; that when we *poyze* and *weigh* things most *impartially*, yet we are not able to come to a *determination*, but the mind is still in *suspence*.

The doubting Conscience.

* Biochm. T. 1. c. 3. q. 3. p. 7.

b *Conscientia dubia, stricte negative magisque proprie, nil est aliud, quam ambiguitas, sive suspentio animi constituti in aequilibrio*, &c. Bress. l. 4. c. 1. p. 350.

c Bress. *ibid.* sect. 5. *Vox dubia conscientia addita sit diminuens seu alienans, haud aliter quam ens ratione ens dicitur* &c. Voetius pt. 3. p. 828.

d — *Si non malitia turpi, saltem tristi.* Voet. ibid.

e *Praeter conscientiam* — König. *de conscientia* p. 13, 14.

f Rom. 14. 23.

g *Minus accurate loquuntur qui fidem istam explicant de fide justificante, & salvifica*, &c. König. *ibid.*

i I speak of *practical* doubts, for of *Speculative*, that proverbial saying of *Æneas Silvius* is undeniably true, *Cui plura nosse datum est, eum majora sequi dubia.* Platina *de vit. Pont. Pij.* 2di. p 308. k Voet. *Sel. disp. pt.* 3. p. 828.

2. Doubts arise from some *peculiar* Reasons. *General* Reasons are not

not *ſufficient* to make a *conſcientious* doubt; there muſt be *intention* of mind upon ſome *particular* reaſons that muſt be *duly* weighed, elſe we may be ſaid to *doubt* of what we ſcarce think of. They have not ſo *good* as a doubting Conſcience, (and that's a bad one) whoſe doubts lurk in *generals*, who have only ſome *cloudy* notions from *without*, or *foggy* miſts from *within*, which they take no *due* courſe to clear. Too many deal with their *doubts*, as *Cripples* with their *ſores*, which might *eaſily* be healed, but they make them a *begging* Argument; ſo the *formal* Hypocrites have *always* their *doubts* and *fears* (like the *Lapwings*, cry far enough from her Neſt) about things *general*, or of *leſſer* moment, which they might *eaſily* anſwer, and imploy themſelves in things more profitable. Shall I tell you *how?* You cannot expect I ſhould reſolve the almoſt *infinite l* particulars of *doubtful* caſes; but I'le propoſe *two* Remedies, which, with the bleſſing of God upon the conſcientious improvement, will give you *light* for *ſmoak*, in things both *Sacred* and *Civil*.

l *Quot modis poſſit accidere conſcientia dubia?* Reſp. *Tot modis poſſe, quot ſunt genera queſtionum.* Azorius *Inſt. Mor.* l. 2. c. 18. p. 135.

Cure. 1. About *leſſer* matters this rule commonly holds good, *viz.* m *In things doubtful, take the ſafeſt courſe.* In things doubtful *ordinarily* one way is *clear*, take that, *e.g.* I queſtion whether ſuch a *recreation* be lawful, but I am ſure 'tis not *unlawful* to let it alone; therefore to prevent the *after-reckonings* of Conſcience, I will not meddle with it, but *n* this will not reach all caſes; therefore,

m *In dubio practico eligenda eſt via tutior ex precepto ſcilicet naturali. Eſt certa & revera communis.* Breſs. *ibid.* l. 4. c. 6. p. 371. ſect. 45. n 'Tis generally taken to be ſafeſt to take that way, (in things controverted) wherein differing parties agree, but that 'tis not always a good rule, See Arch Biſhop *Laud*'s Conference, p. 288. & ſeqq. *In multis particularibus non tenetur homo partem tutiorem ſequi:* Sayrus *clav. reg.* l. 1. c. 13. p. 31. ſect. 9.

2. *Bring the caſe to a point, wherein the ſtreſs of your doubt lies*; but be ſure it be a caſe of *Conſcience*, not of *intereſt*, or *prejudice*, but a caſe of Conſcience, ſuch as you are *unreſervedly* willing to be reſolved in, that you can in prayer (as it were) bring God a *blank* to write what he pleaſeth. And 2. Pare off all thoſe *whibling* demurs, and *carnal* reaſonings which may *puzzle*, but can never *ſatisfie* you. Theſe things premiſed, 3. Write down your caſe as *nakedly* as you can, with the *grounds* of your hæſitation: in your writing, make two *Columns*; on the *one* ſide write thoſe Reaſons you judge cogent [*for*] on the *other* ſide, the Reaſons you judge of moment [*againſt*] that whereof you doubt: *compare* theſe together, and *poize* them *impartially*, you will find that your

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your *perplexed* thoughts have another *aspect* when *written*, than when *floating*, and that your own *Ink* will *ordinarily* kill this *Letter*; plainly *your selves* will be able to resolve your own doubts: but if not, this will *ripen* the *Boyl*, where it doth not *break* and *heal* it, you will be *ready* for advice *. In your *consulting* of others, do it with *expressions* equivalent to those of the Jews to *Jeremy*, (but with more *sincere* affections) *Jer.* 42. ver. 2. — *Pray for us unto the Lord thy God.* — Vers. 3. *That the Lord thy God may shew us the way wherein we may walk, and the thing that we may do.* — Vers. 5. *The Lord be a true and faithful witness between us, if we do not,* * *according to all things, for the which the Lord thy God shall send thee to us.* Vers. 6. *Whether it be good, or whether it be evil, (i. e.* seem it never so disadvantagious or dangerous to us) *we will obey the voice of the Lord our God, to whom we send thee, that it may be well with us, when we obey the voice of the Lord our God.* But because we have none can give *infallible* decision, therefore refer your case to those that are likely to give a *different* resolution, and thereby you will see how much is to be allowed to *humane* passion: request them to write the *grounds* of their *Determination*; then *compare* these together, especially the *Scriptures* and *Reasons*. If you cannot out of these collect a *satisfying* resolution, (yet the case will be brought into a *narrower* compass) be *unwearied* therefore to take the *same* course again, apply your selves to the *same* persons, or others; [*one*] case thus *thorowly* resolved, will be *singularly* useful for the *scattering* of all *future* doubts in *all* other cases: And though this may prove a business of *time*, yet *suspend* your acting * *till* you are satisfied: though the *duty* in question be of *greatest* moment, yet while you can approve your heart unto God, that 'tis neither *love* of sin nor *ease*, 'tis neither slighting of *Christ* nor *duty*, but a *restless* inquisitiveness to know *God's* mind in the case, your *suspence* (at the *worst*) will be reckoned among your *infirmities*, and be *compassionately* overlookt. Can there be any thing of *greater* moment, than to doubt of Christ's *resurrection*? yet while *Thomas* † doubted meerly for want of *evidence*, Christ graciously condescends in a *non-such* manner to give him *satisfaction*. To conclude this, *whereto* * *ye have already attained, walk* by *rule* exactly; *and if in any thing you be* doubtfully *minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.*

* *Vide* Sayr: Clav. Reg. *Ibidem.* sect. 6, & 7.

* Jer. 42. 5, &c. *Expressius est juramentum quo dicitur, Testis est Deus; quam quo dicitur, Juro, quia illud explicat rationem juramenti,* &c. Estius in loc.

* *Contra legem charitatis in Deum facit is qui cum dubium animum habeat, nihilominus operatur — actus ad sui bonitatem, rectam cognitionem rei agendæ requirit & postulat.* Azor. Instit. mor. l. 2. c. 13. pag. 135.

† John 20. 25, 27. * Phil. 3. 15, 16.

V. *A scrupulous Conscience, is that which doth determine a thing to be lawful,* The scrupulous Conscience.

† *Statuit rem aliquam esse licitam, sed ideo in effectum minus deducendam, quia scrupulus aliquis, qui auxiam reddat conscientiam, ne forsitan res ista sit illicita,* Konig. de conf. p. 14.

lawful †, *yet scarcely to be done, lest it should be unlawful.* There's some *anxiety, reluctancy,* and *fear* in the *determination.* A *scruple* in the *mind* is as *gravel* * in the *Shooe,* it vexeth the *Conscience,* as that hurts the *foot.* A scruple is a *hovering* kind of fearfulness, arising from *light* † Arguments that *hinder* or *disturb* the Soul in performances of Duties.

The difference between a *doubting Conscience* and a *scrupulous Conscience,* is this; A doubting Conscience, assents to neither part of the question; a scrupulous Conscience, consents but with some vexation.

* *Scrupulus diminutivum à scrupus, lapillus est qui in calceo. Hinc metaphoricè significat similem afflictionem animæ seu conscientiæ,* 1 Sam 25 31. *non erit in scrupulum cordis,* &c. Cress. de conf. l 6. c. 1. p. 562. † Amel. *Ibidem* p. 16.

Causes

I shall name but *two* Causes (forbearing to mention our *ignorance* and *pride*) which have a *great* influence upon all kind of *Error, Doubts,* and *Scruples.*

1. The first cause of scrupulousness is *natural* *, *viz.* a *cold complexion,* which is alwayes *timorous*; those that are *phlegmatick* and *melancholly,* are naturally fearful; and the reason is, that through the defect of natural heat, the spirits about the heart are as it were *congealed,* and the heart it self is *straitned*; whence by way of *sympathy,* the imagination hath *sad* apprehensions of things, and such persons are *pusillanimous* and fearful.

2. The second and the *chief* cause is *temptations.* Satan, if he cannot keep the heart a *secure* Prisoner, he'l do his utmost to *overwhelm* it with fears and jealousies, and he sutes his temptations according to our temper †. He doth not tempt the *virtuous* with rewards, nor the *glutton* to the glory of abstinence; he doth not tempt the *coward* to strive for victories, nor the *passionate* to fearfulness; he doth not tempt the *melancholly* to security, nor the *phlegmatick* to great atchievements. *A due consideration* thereof, *of our natural temper, would mend our spiritual.*

1. The first *remedy* I shall commend to you, is this, *viz. Be not discouraged with your scruples:* 'Pray' keep off from the other extream, do not *indulge* them, they *naturally* tend to much *spiritual* damage; They 1. are occasions of sin. 2. They render the wayes of God more strait, horrid, and impossible. 3. They retard the work of Grace. 4. They hinder chearfulness in the Service of God. 5. They quench the Spirit. 6. They unfit us for any Duty. These may all serve for Arguments to strive against them: But yet, be not discouraged, for God is pleased

* *Scrupulus—vel melancholia vel fœcunia enatus—* Konig. ibid. p. 15. — *Item ex ægritudine & infirmitate —ex nonnullis causis quæ cerebrum exsiccant, ut sunt jejunium, vigilia,* &c. Sayr. cl reg. l. 1. c. 14. p. 42.

† *Singulis hominibus vitiis convenientibus insidiatur, neque enim facile captivaret: Si aut luxui ipsis præmia, aut avaris scorta proponeret: Si aut voraces de abstinentiæ gloria; aut abstinentes de gulæ imbecilitate pulsaret ergo in tentationis ardore calidè singulis insidians, vicinos moribus laqueos abscondit.* Greg. mor. l. 29. c. 14. p. 161. b.

through

through *over-powring* grace to make good uſe of them. 1. To further mortification. 2. To reſtrain us from worldly vanities. 3. To abate pride, and promote humility. 4. To make us more watchful. 5. To make us ſtrive to be more ſpiritual. 6. To (little leſs than) *force* us to live more upon Chriſt: but you muſt take the *other* rule, if you would have theſe benefits.

2. *Do what poſſibly you can to get* * *rid of your Scruples: but if you cannot get rid of them, act againſt them.* 'Tis not only *lawful*, but *neceſſary* to go againſt a ſcrupulous Conſcience, or you will *never* have neither *grace* nor *peace*. Should a Chriſtian forbear *praying*, or *receiving* the Sacrament, every time his ſcrupulous Conſcience tells him, he had better *wholly* omit the duty, than perform it in *ſuch* a manner, you would ſoon find, to your ſorrow, the *miſchief* of your Scruples, but grace will not leave him to his ſcrupulous humour. Be reſolute therefore, and tell the Devil, *That as you do not perform your duty at his* command, *ſo neither will you omit it at his* bidding. Do by religious Duties, as they that are afraid to go by *water*, or to go over a *narrow* Bridge, they ceaſe to fear when they have gone *often* over: ſo by the *performance* of duties, your ſcrupulous fears will vaniſh. Act againſt your ſcruples, 1. *Poſitively*, by diſputing them down, and oppoſing their reaſons. 2. *Negatively*, by ſlighting of them, and not hearkning to them. In ſhort, *In all neceſſary known duties; always do what you can, when you can't do what you would.*

* Vide *Breſſ.* l. 6. c. 2.—5.

VI. The *trembling* Conſcience is that which is *diſquieted* *, and *diſtreſſed* with the (apprehended) *hazard* of the *Souls* condition, that doth nothing but *accuſe*, and *condemn*, and *affright* the Soul. This, of any, needs leaſt enlargement, for every one that feels it, is rhetorical enough in expreſſing it.

The trembling Conſcience.

* *Dorotheus* compares our Conſciences to thoſe Pits that *Abraham* digged, and the Philiſtines ſtopped them with earth, *Gen* 26. 50. *Ob peccatum ut in aqua caneſacta & turbida, nemo poteſt in ea vultum ſuum contemplari.* B. P. T 4. p. 769.

There's a *twin cauſe* of a trembling Conſcience, *viz.* Senſe of *ſin* *, and fear of *wrath* †. Never *ſin* like mine! never *heart* like mine! never *caſe* like mine! Such are the conſtant complaints of a troubled ſpirit. I meddle not now with that *horror* of Conſcience that follows *profligate* * wretches; I ſhall ſpeak ſomething of it toward the cloſe, nothing now.

Cauſe.

* Pſal. 51 3.
Pſal. 40. 12.
† Pſal. 38. 2.--8
Pſal. 88 3, &c.
* *Nemo a ſe, & extra ſe curret—nullus ſui aſylum habet.* Euſ. Nieremberg *de art. vol.* l. 2. p. 158.

For *Cure*, I can give but hints. Never keep the Devils Counſel. Break through all carnal Reaſonings, to acquaint your ſelves with ſome

Cure.

faithful spiritual Physitian, or experienced Christian, that may shew you
*1 Cor. 10. 13. the methods of divine Grace, and what others * have successfully done that have been just in your condition. This premised,

1. *Notwithstanding* (yea in the *midst* of) your *saddest* complaints, *Bless God for an awakened Conscience, while there's hope of cure.* It is a good rule, Be not too quick in administring *comforts*; but we cannot
* Read 1 *Thes.* 5. 18. with the verses next before and after. be too quick in provoking * to *thankfulness.* If you can at *present* be thankful that you are out of Hell, you shall e're *long* be thankful for assurance of Heaven. This Rule may seem strange, but (upon *experience*) its practice will discover its excellency.

2. Observe, 'tis God's *usual* method to bring the Soul through these
*—*Instabam tu in occultis meis Domine sæ vera misericordia, flagella ingeminans timoris & pudoris, ne rursus cessarem, jam penè faciebam & non faciebam: —sentiebam me ab iniquitatibus teneri, & jactabam voces miserabiles: quamdiu, quamdiu cras & cras? quare non modo, quare non hac hora finis turpitudinis meæ? — Aug Conf. l. 9. c. 11, 12.* *perplexities* to the most *solid* spiritual peace. *Augustine* * excellently expresseth his *spiritual* conflict, how God followed him with *severe* mercy, till he made him instant for *thorow-holiness.* God kept him *trembling*, that he might leave *dallying* in soul-concernments. Believe it Christian, God is now *storing* thee with experiences, which will be a useful *treasury* throughout thy life. Therefore,

*1 Cor. 15. 8. *Nihil tibi utilius fore scias, quam ut cum profunda quadam ac forti resignatione teipsum Deo humiliter resignes in omnibus, quæ tibi evenerint. Sive dulcia ea fuerint, sive amara, sive delectent, sive crucient, ita ut dicere possis: O Deus, adorande etiamsi in hac vita ista qui pressura ad extremum usque judicii diem permanendum mihi foret, te tamen haud quaquam deserere vellem, sed constanter perpetuòque tibi adhærerem, &c. Thauler. in histor. vit. p. 16.* † Psal. 126. 5, 6. 3. Do but hold on * in the *vigorous* use of all means of Grace, and reckon God's keeping thee from turning thy back upon his wayes, when thou hast no comfort in them, the *secret* supports he gives, which thou takest no notice of; count these for *evidences*, that the Spirit is at work in thy heart; and for *pledges*, that he will perfect his own work. *e. g.* Count thy *growing* importunity in prayer, (or sorrowful complaint for the want of it) a *gracious* answer of *that* prayer, which thou thinkest is *disregarded.* Count thy *watching* for a word to *direct* and *support* thee, a *notable* efficacy of that word, which thou counteſt doth thee no good. Count thy *restless* dissatisfaction with every thing on this side God, to be a *love-token* from God, to assure thee that God will be thy *satisfying* portion; and in the *interims*, ask those *well grown* Christians that are now in the *spiritually sensible* embraces of divine Love, whether they are not glad that God formerly took that course with them, which he now takes with thee, to bring them to these joys. Be encouraged therefore, though thou hast a sorrowful † Seed-time, thou shalt have a joyful Harvest.

Thus

Thus having ſpoken of thoſe kinds of Conſcience that are either *evil* or *troubleſome*, and how to cure them. I now come to thoſe deſirable kinds of Conſcience, that next to *Deity* and Heavenly *Glory*, admit no *hyperbole* in their commendation, *viz.* the good *honeſt* Conſcience, and the good *peaceable* Conſcience, and how to obtain them.

The good honeſt Conſc.

VII. That Conſcience is *good*, in reſpect of its *integrity*, which gives a right judgment of every thing, according to the Word of God. I grant, that the Law of *Nature* binds *k*, *Eccleſiaſtical* Laws bind *l*, and *Political* Laws bind *m*, but the *Word* of God is the *principal* Rule *n*, which *preciſely* binds the Conſcience in regard of its Author *o*; *There is one Law-giver, who is able to ſave and to deſtroy. Fear p not them which kill the body, and are not able to kill the Soul; but rather fear him which is able to deſtroy both Soul and Body in Hell.*

k Rom. 2. 14.
l Mat. 23. 2, 3.
m Rom. 13. 5.
n *Norma principaliſſima* &c König. p. 3, 4.
o James 4. 12.
p Mat. 10. 28.

Good quiet Conſcience.

VIII. That Conſcience is a good *peaceable* Conſcience that excuſeth *q*, abſolveth *r*, and comforteth *ſ* as it ought, that Conſcience that's pacified *t* by the Blood of Chriſt, that doth, as *Moulin** relates of a dying man, to whom ſome ſay the Devil appeared, and ſhewed him a Parchment, that was very long, wherein was written, on every ſide, the ſins of the poor ſick man, which were many in number: and that there were alſo written the idle words he had ſpoken, which made up three quarters of the words that he had ſpoken in his life — and his actions digeſted according to the Commandments: Whereupon Satan ſaid, *Seeſt thou? behold thy Vertues, ſee here what thine Examination ſhall be:* Whereunto the poor ſinner anſwered, *It is true Satan; but thou haſt not ſet down all; for thou ſhouldeſt have added, and ſet down here below, The Blood of Jeſus Chriſt cleanſeth us from all our ſins; and this alſo ſhould not have been forgotten, That whoſoever believeth in him ſhall not periſh, but have everlaſting Life.* But how ſhall we get ſuch Conſciences? Chriſtians, be but perſwaded to practiſe *theſe* (or *ſuch*) directions, and your Conſciences will *certainly* be right, and *ſeaſonably* be comfortable.

q 1 Cor. 4. 4.
r Heb. 10. 2.
ſ 2 Cor. 1. 12.
t Heb. 9. 14.
* *Moulin*, the comfort of a Communicant, *p.* 37.

1. Take heed of *every* ſin †, count no ſin ſmall *x*. *Screw* up your obedience to *every y* Command to the higheſt. *Ferret* out every ſin to the moſt *ſecret z* corruption. When you have ſet your watch againſt the *firſt* riſings of ſin, beware of the *borders* of ſin, ſhun the very *b appearance of evil*. Venture not upon occaſions *c* or temptations to ſin; thoſe that dare venture upon occaſions, as Children upon the Ice *d*, ſhall

† 2 Cor. 8. 21.
x Mat. 5. 21, 22, 27, 28.
y Mat. 22. 37, 38.
z Rom. 7. 7.
b 1 Theſ. 5. 22.
c Proverbs 4. 15, 27. *Facile agitur quod libenter auditur.* Bern. *de inter. dom.* pag. 1082.
d Prov. 7. 8. Numb 15. 2.

find

find there's *always* danger, *never* any good. Morality it self will teach d you this lesson; to keep clear of evil, if ever you would either *be* good, or *enjoy* it; but seeing, as on the one hand, there cannot be *truth* of grace, and *truce* with sin, so on the other hand, while Grace is imperfect, sin will *have* (and make us feel it hath) a being. *There's not a just man upon earth, that doth good and sinneth not* e. Therefore,

II. Forthwith set upon the *healing* duty of *repentance*, and upon every slip into sin renew it f, speedily renew it. O that I could snatch you out of your *state* of impenitency, and perswade you to daily *actual* repentance. To those that are resolved to delay their repentance, I have sometimes given counsel sutable to such resolutions, *viz.* The next sickness that seizeth upon you, chide it away, tell your Disease you can't awhile to be sick; say to it as *Paul* to *Felix* g, *Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season I will call for thee.* If death summon thee, tell it, You will not obey its summons, you have other business to do than to die; you have Estates unsetled, and Children unprovided for, and you would repent too before you die, but you can't yet awhile. If this will not serve, but die you must; charge your souls before they go out of your bodies, not to come near the prison of impenitent persons, charge your friends to lock up your bodies so safe, or bury them so deep, that all the Angels in Heaven may not be able to drag them to judgement. But alas my Brethren! do you not think this wild counsel? and well you may. Yet unless you could do something æquivalent to what this counsel amounts to, you are mad to defer your repentance. What! cannot I keep pain from my body, nor the use of reason in my Soul one minute, and shall I continue in my impenitency, that will damn me the very moment of my death? I beseech you therefore, for your own Souls sake, that you may not be guilty of the worst self-murder, *i.e.* soul-murder, speedily set upon repentance. And those of you that have repented, let your repentance daily supplant sin, by taking it by the heel certainly to lame it, though you cannot take it by the head utterly to kill it. Though we can't be innocent h, let's be pœnitent, and be very careful never to return i to sins repented of. That you may be serious in both these.

III. Compose thy self to live as under Gods eye, live as in the (more than) sensible presence of the jealous God. Remember, all things are naked and bare before him, you cannot deceive him, for he is infinite Wisdom; you cannot fly from him, for he is every where; you cannot bride him, for he is Righteousness it self. Keep therefore fresh apprehensions of God in your thoughts; speak, as knowing God hears you; walk

d Οὔτε οἰκία πολυτελὴς, οὔτε χωρίου πλῆθος οὔτε ἀξίωμα γένους, οὔτε μέγεθος ἀρχῆς· οὐ λύπου χωρὶς, οὐ δειλίας ἐνδεκτικὸν· περίχαρὲς ἐστιν ἡ γαλήνη τῆς ψυχῆς καθαρὸν καὶ ἀμέτοχον βουλευμάτων πονηρῶν. &c. Plutarch περὶ εὐθυμίας. p. 417.

e Eccles. 7. 20.

f *Peccator omnium notarum cùm sim, nec ulli rei nisi pœnitentiæ natus* Tertul. *de pœnit.* p. 121. C. 12

g Acts 24. 25.

h Σοφία πρᾶγμα βίου ἀπαντλοῦσα καὶ ψυχὴν κεκαθαρμένον ἢ καθαιρόμενον, &c. Μίαν κρίσιν φέρομεν —— φυγὴ τοῦ πλημμεμοῦς.

Nazianz. T. 1. *orat.* 15. p. 225, 230.

i *Confessio peccati professio est desinendi*, &c. *Hilar.* in Psal. 137. p. 595.

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walk as knowing * God is nearer to you than you are to your selves. *The † Lord is with you, while you are with him, i. e.* you shall enjoy his favourable presence, while you live in his awful presence. There's one *Psalm*, which 'twere well if Christians would do by it, as *Pythagoras* ‖ by his golden precepts, every morning and evening repeat it; 'tis *David's n* appeal of a good Conscience unto God, against the malicious suspitions and calumnies of men. [Do you but thus præsentiate God unto your selves, and God will attest your integrity] *Psal.* 139. *v.* 1. *O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me*, q. d. O Lord, thou art the heart-searching God, who perfectly knows all the thoughts, counsels, studies, endeavours and actions of all men, and therefore mine; *ver.* 2. *Thou knowest my down-sitting, and mine up-rising, thou understandest my thought afar off*, q. d. thou knowest my rest and motion, and my plodding thoughts of both *o*. ver. 3. *Thou compassest my path, and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways*, q. d. thou sannest and winnowest me, *i. e.* thou discussest and tryest me to the utmost *p*. ver. 4. *For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether*; q. d. I cannot speak a word, though never so secret, obscure, or subtile, but thou knowest, what, and why, and with what mind 'twas uttered *q*. ver. 5. *Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me*; q. d. Thou keepest me within the compass of thy knowledge, like a man that will not let his Servant go out of his sight. I cannot break away from thee. ver. 6. *Such knowledge is too wonderful for me: it is high, I cannot attain unto it*; q. d. The knowledge of thy great and glorious Majesty and Infiniteness, is utterly past all humane comprehension. ver. 7. *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy Presence?* q. d. Whither can I flee from thee, whose Essence, Presence, and Power is every where. ver. 8. *If I ascend up into Heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in Hell, behold thou art there*; q. d. There's no height above thee, there's no depth below *r* thee. ver. 9. *If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the utmost parts of the Sea*; q. d. If I had wings to fly as swift as the morning light *s*, from the *east* to the *west*, that I could in a moment get to the furthest parts of the world. ver. 10. *Even there shall thy hand lead me: and thy right hand shall hold me*; q. d. Thence shall thy hand lead me back, and hold me fast like a fugitive *t*. ver. 11. *If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me: even the night shall be light about me*, q. d. Though darknes hinders mans *sight*, it doth not *thine*. In a word, look which way you will, there's no hiding place from God. Job 34. 21, 22. *For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings; there is no darkness nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity*

* *Talem te præpara, ut tecum adsit Deus: sit in ore: sit in corde: semper tecum eat: tecum redeat: nec recedat a te. Nunquam ille te dimittet, nisi prior illum dimiseris, ubicunque fueris, nunquam solus esse poteris, si Deus tecum erit.* Bern. *de int. dom.* p 1065 c. 5. & 1091. c. 66.

† 2 Chron. 15. 2

‖ —— *Refert* Galenus *recisse se sub initium & finem cujusque diei.* Elichmannus *Epit. Edit.* p. 15

n Mo ler *in loc*

o Estius *in loc.*

p Ainsw. *in loc*

q Tirin. *in loc.*

r Nulla altitudo te altior: nullum profundum te profundius. Hieron, *in loc.*

s Aurora solis præannuncia, momento totum hemisphærium pervadit. Menoch. *in loc.*

t Deducat —— *tenebit ut fugientem teneri fugitivum.* Sa-

iniquity may hide themselves. Therefore Christians, do nothing but what you are willing God should take notice of, and judge in your selves whether this be not the way to have a *good* and *quiet* Conscience?

IV. Be serious and frequent in the *examination* of your *heart* and *life*. This is so necessary to the getting and keeping of a right and peaceable Conscience, that 'tis impossible to have either without it. There are some Duties and Graces, like those parts of the body, that may supply the defect of other parts; or like some Drugs in Physick, which when they can't be had, some of the like nature may serve: but this is like those, the defect whereof nothing else can supply. The Heathens have grop't out this rule by the *Glowworm* light of Nature. *Pythagoras* gives it as a *Precept* *; and *Seneca* backs it by examples † of *Sextius*, who every night, before he composed himself to sleep, asked himself, What evil hast thou this day healed? What vice hast thou resisted? Wherein art thou better? O how sweet is that sleep which follows such a recognition of himself, who made every night a scrutiny into the words and deeds of the whole day, he would neither pass by, nor hide any thing from himself; he so ript up his faults, that he would not pardon them to himself, without a self-charge not to repeat them. Have you gone thus far? Certainly, my Brethren, not to out-strip them is inexcusable. *It is a shame* * *to see the carelesness of most, that are better acquainted with any thing than themselves: there are many that know the histories of a thousand years past, and yet cannot tell you the particulars of their own lives; Men well acquainted with the mysteries of Arts and Nature, but utterly ignorant of the secrets of their own Souls. How few are there amongst us, that can say with* David †, *I have thought on my wayes, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies? Nay, we have a thousand matters to think on all the day long, the night too, the week, the year; but who questions with his own heart, What am I? What do I? How live I? Is the course I follow good and lawful? Is that which I omit, my duty, or not? Is God my friend? Am I his? What hope have I of Heaven? Say, I die to morrow, to day, this very hour, where is my assurance I shall be saved? What Apologie can I make against the accusations of Satan and my Conscience? Will Christ be mine Advocate, when I shall stand in judgment?* Have I grace, or have I none? *Do I grow in grace, or do I decay? Am I better this year than I was the last? What sins have I conquered now, that held me in combat e then? What graces have I obtained now, that I had not then?* Christians do you do thus? If you do, that is not enough, unless you do it frequently, daily. Every evening ere you sleep,

Πῶς παρέλιπον; τί δ' ἔπραξα; τί μοι δέον οὐκ ἐπράχθη. Pytha. aur. prac n. 42. p. 9.

† — *Somnus quàm tranquillus, altus ac liber, cum aut laudatus est animus, aut admonitus, & speculator sui censorque secretus cognoscit de moribus suis? utor hac potestate, & quotidie apud me causam dico. Cum sublatum è conspectu lumen est, & conticuit uxor moris jam mei conscia, totum diem mecum scrutor facta ac dicta mea remetior, nihil mihi ipse abscondo, nihil transeo: quare enim quicquam ex erroribus meis timeam, cum possim dicere: vide ne istud amplius facias, nunc tibi ignosco, &c.* Senec. *de ira.* l. 3 c. 36. p. 599

* Pemble. p. 514.

† Ps. 119. 59.

sleep, review *e* your carriage in the day, what you have *done*, or *spoke*, or *thought*, that is but so much as *indecent*. Whether your hearts have been *intent* upon Religion, and *indifferent* to the world. Briefly, have special care of two portions *f*, of your times, *viz.* *Morning* and *Evening*; the morning to *fore-think* what ought to be done, and the evening to *examine*, whether you have done what you ought.

e Περὶ τῆς ἀναπαύσεως ἀναμένειν τὴν προσηκουσαν τοῦ σώματος ἀνάπαυσιν ἢ τῶν ἰδίων καρδίας ἢ ἐξ ὑπνου ἐγερσεως, ἢ περὶ τοῦ ἐγρηγορέναι παρὰ τὸ δέον, ἢ ἐπιμέλεια τῶν ἀπηγορευμένων, ἢ λογοθεσία τοῦ καθήκοντος, ἢ περὶ τοῦ σωφρονεῖν ῥᾳθυμεῖ, &c. Basil. T. 2. p. 514. f Crocius Synt. p. 1212. ex aliis.

V. Be *much* in prayer *g*, in all *manner* of *h* prayer, but especially in *secret* *i* prayer. Do not non-suit your selves by the love of *sin*, and you shall certainly be heard when you pray for *Grace* *k*: believe it Christian, 'tis not thine *inevitable* *l* weakness, nor thy *sensible* dulness *m*, nor thy *lamented* rovings *n*, nor thy *opposed* distractions *o*, nor thy *mistaken* unbelief *p*; it is not any, nor all these can shut out thy Prayers, if thou dost not *regard* *q* *iniquity in thy heart*; therefore be incouraged, 'tis the voice of your beloved that saith *r*, *Verily, verily I say unto you, whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing* (to what you might ask) *in my name: Ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.* But this and the two next rules will be spoken to in the following Cases, I shall therefore but little more than name them.

g Psal. 109. 4
h Eph. 6. 1
i Mat. 6. 6
k Heb. 4. 16
l 2 Cor. 12. 10
m Mar. 14. 38, 40.
n Psal. 86. 11
o Gen. 15. 11
p 1 Joh. 5. 12
q Psal. 66. 18
r Joh. 16. 23, 24.

VI. Let every action have reference unto your whole life, and not unto a part only *s*; propose some end to your selves in every thing *t*, and let all your lesser and subordinate ends be plainly reducible unto the great end of your living. The emphasis of the Apostles Exhortation is very great *u*, *Exercise thy self unto godliness*, q. d. Be as diligent in Religion, as thou wouldst have thy children that go to School to be in Learning. Or thus; let thy whole life be a preparation for heaven, like the wrestlers or combatants preparation for victory. Or thus; strip thy self of all incumbrances that thou mayest attend unto piety: Pleasures may tickle thee for a while, but they have an *heart-aking* farwell. Thou mayest call thy riches *goods*, but within a few days what *good* will they do thee? Men may *flatter* thee for thy Greatness, but with God thy *account* will be the greater. Therefore *always* mind that, which will *always* be advantage.

s Episc. *Inst. theol* l. 1. c. 1. p. 3.
t *Si aliquem exeuntem domo interrogaveris: quo tu, quid cogitas? respondebit tibi: non Mehercule scio, sed aliquos videbo, aliquid agam, ——cursus est, qualis formicis per arbusta repentibus; quæ in summum cacumen, deinde in imum inanes aguntur——domum cum super vacua redeuntes lassitudine, jurant nescisse seipsos, quare exierint.* Seneca *de Tranquil.* c. 12. p. 685; u 1 Tim. 4. 7. γυμναζε σεαυτὸν πρὸς εὐσέβειαν γυμνάζειν est propiè exercere in gymnade. Grot. *in loc.*

VII. Live more upon *Christ* than upon *inherent* Grace. Do not ven-

ture upon ſin becauſe Chriſt hath purchaſed a pardon, that's a moſt horrible and impious *abuſe* of Chriſt: For this very reaſon there was no ſacrifice under the Law for any wilful wickedneſs, leſt people might think they knew the price of ſin, as thoſe do that truck with Popiſh indulgences and Pardons. But that none may be overwhelmed with the over-ſenſe of their unworthineſs, be it known to you, *We have an* [1] 1 John 2. 1: *Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the Righteous**, and our ſalvation is better, ſafer, more for Gods Glory, and our comfort, in his hand than in ours.

VIII. Be every way nothing in your own Eyes *x*; 'tis the humble ſoul that thrives exceedingly, and alas what have we to be proud *y* of? Look we either at our conſtitution, or converſation; our conception ſinful, our birth pœnal, our life toylſome, and our death we know not what; but all this is nothing to the ſtate of our ſoul. A *Stoick* could give this rule, that if any one *z* tell you of anothers ſpeaking evil of thee, do not excuſe thy ſelfe, but ſay, he did not know me, or elſe he would have ſpoken worſe. A Convert, when he once comes to be ſenſible of ſin, ſees more cauſe to be weary of his life, than proud of his graces. To riſe and fall, confeſs ſin and commit it; to ſee others out-run us, that ſet out after us; to recover that time for communion with God, which we trifle away in unobſerved impertinencies; Surely for ſuch perſons to be low and vile in their own eyes, deſerves not to be called humility, though the contrary be worſe than deviliſh pride. Be perſwaded therefore to believe of your ſelves in the uſe of *Agurs* (ſome ſuppoſe *Solomons*) words of himſelf, *Pro.* 30. 2. *Surely I am more bruttiſh than any man*, &c. *q. d.* I do not make uſe of my reaſon, ver. 3. *I have not the knowledge of the holy.* q. d. my knowledge of holy myſteries is very little; in compariſon of my ignorance, nothing. Be as willing that others ſhould ſpeak ill of you, as you are to ſpeak ill of your ſelves: and be as unwilling that others ſhould commend *a* you, as you are to commend your ſelves.

x Deſcendendo cœlum aſcenditur. Drexel. *de prad.*

y unde ſuperbit homo cujus conceptio culpa, naſci pœna, labor vita, neceſſe mori, quando vel quomodo vel ubi, neſcire? Bernard. *de inter. dom. c.* 53. *Mallem non eſſe quam talis eſſe.* Ibid. c 33 *Accuſo me non excuſo, nec idcirco juſtus ſum quoniam ſi alter ita mea accuſaret, ſicut ego meipſum accuſo, patienter ſuſtinere non poſſem.* Ibid. c. 34. &c. p. 1078.

z Et ſic Epictetus c. 48. p. 276. Simp. *com.*

a Multos vidiſſe qui potuerint perferre multa incommoda in corpore & fortunis, qui autem potuerit contemnere laudes ſuas neminem. Luther. T. 4. p. 149. *com. in Gal. ex al.*

b Pſal. 73. 1. *c* Τῆς περὶ τὸν Θεὸν εὐαρεστίας

IX. Entertain good thoughts of God *b* what ever he doth with you, whatever he requires of you, what ever he laies upon you *c*. We never

ἰσθι ὅτι τὸ κυριώτατον ἐκεῖνο ἐστὶν ὀρθὰς ὑπολήψεις περὶ ἀὐτῶν ἔχειν, ὡς ὄντων, καὶ διοικουμένων τὰ ὅλα καλῶς, καὶ δικαίως καὶ σαυτὸν εἰς τοῦτο κατατεταχέναι, τὸ πείθεσθαι αὐτοῖς, καὶ εἴκειν ὑπὸ πᾶσι τοῖς γινομένοις καὶ ἀναλυθεὶν ἑκόντα, ὡς ὑπὸ τῆς ἀίδιος γνώμης ἐπισπομένοις ἅτῳ γὰρ ἔτεμέμψῃ πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς, ὅτ' ἐγκακήσεις, ὡς ἀμελήσουσιν, &c. Epict. c. 38. Simpl. p. 212.

arrive

arrive to any considerable holiness, or peace, till we lose *d* our selves in Deity, till our understandings be fill'd with admiration, till our wills be in a sober sense, divine: till our affections be, in a spiritual sense, transported. When we can at once unriddle Gods methods of grace, & make good constructions of Gods methods of Providence, making a spiritual improvement of both, then we are not far from being universally and exactly conscientious, there's yet one thing wanting, and that's implyed in this, but it must be eminently expresst.

X. Do all you do out of love to God. Spirtual *love-sickness* is the souls *healthfullest* constitution. When love to God is both *Cause*, *Means*, *Motive* and *End* of all our activity in the business of Religion, then the soul is upon the wing towards its rest. Then *e* is our love to other things regular, when the alone goodness of God moves us to love them; as the alone respect to health makes me use physick, the means hath no proper goodness distinct from the goodness of the end; those means which were profitable, though they remain un-changed in themselves, yet they become unprofitable by the alone change of the end, *e.g.* Health being recovered, physick is unprofitable, which while we were infirm was profitable; so we are not to love any means without relation to the end, because 'tis contrary to the purity of that love which we owe to God for we ought so to love God, that *with* him, or *under* him we love nothing else, but all things only *in* him, because otherwise we do not love him without our whole heart. *e.g.* In mens loving their wives, and wives their husbands; in Parents loving their children, and children their Parents, 'tis a rare pitch to love all these in God; that is, to advance our love to God by them, and so far as any of them draw off our love to God, to say to them as Christ to *Peter*, *Get thee behind me Satan, thou art an offence unto me.* Love is extended to good: the more good therefore any thing is, the more it is to be beloved: *But thou O Lord my God* (saith Bradwardine f) *art the Good of every good, good above all things that are good, a good most infinitely infinite: how much therefore should I rationally love thee? should not my love be proportionably infinite? I would I could so love thee: but how shall I that am so very little and finite love thee infinitely! And yet without so loving thee, how will there be kept any due proportion in loving thee, who dost infinitely exceed all other lovely things? I ought to love thee infinitely as to the manner, though I cannot as to the act of my love,* i. e. *I ought to love thee finally for thy self, or else I may love thee in some sort infinitely, as to the Act, both intensively and extensively; in some sort intensively,* i. e. *more intensely, more firmly, more strongly than any finite good, because I love them but for thee. In some sort extensively, by comparing*

d *Hoc est totalem dei voluntate conformitatem & consonantiam habere nimirum, nos totos ei offerendo, ut quodcunque quandocunque quomodocunque ipse voluerit, de nobis faciat ac statuat; idq; sine ulla exceptione, & contradictione, & nihil prorsus nobis reservando.* Rodericius. *exerc perfec. pt. 1. tr. 8. c. 14 p. 355.*

e *Ita sola bonitas dei movet ad amorem charitatis erga proximum, sola ratio sanitatis movet ad utendum potione medica* ——*omnia quæ voluntati objiciuntur sint aut finis aut media, hæc ob solum finem appeti—— media quæ media, dicunt tantum relationem ad finem, non autem fundamentum ipsius, tum quia contraria est puritati amoris, quo deo inhærere debemus. Ira enim, aut passim apud solidiores vitæ spiritualis*

magiſtros videre eſt, amare debemus deum, ut cum illo, etiam ſub illo nihil aliud amemus; ſed omnia dunta xat in illo: quia alias non amamus illum ex toto corde, ſed aliud quidpiam ab illo occupat cor noſtrum. Gibieuf. *de lib. dei & creat.* l. 1 c. 11. p. 66.

f Tu autem Domine deus meus es omnis boni bonum, ſuper omnia bona bonus, bonum infinitiſſimè infinitum —— quomodo tantum plus amabo te, quam tu amas me, quantum tu es melior me? debeo amare te finaliter propter te, & omnia alia propter te, tu autem non amas me propter me, nec cætera propter me—debeo etiam amare te infinite quodammodo interſive ſupra quodcunque bonum finitum, tu autem non ſic amas me. Debeo quoque amare te infinite quodammodo extenſive, volendo ſcil. potius quotcunque & quantacunque bona alia, etiam & meipſum non eſſe quam te, vel quam te ſemel offendere, tu vero non ſic amas me, quia non debeo ſic amari, &c. Bradwardin. *de cauſa dei.* l. 2. c. 34. p. 627. *& ſeqq.*

comparing all things, how many, or how great ſoever with thee, and loving thee before, and above all, that I had rather all things in the world, and my ſelf too to have no being, than once to offend thee. But Lord thou loveſt thy friends in an unſpeakable manner more than they can love thee. O therefore thou great Lord, thou great Good, that filleſt heaven and earth, why doeſt thou not fill my very little ſoul? O my ſoul that art ſo little, ſo miſerable, why doſt thou not open all thy little doors? why doſt thou not extend thy utmoſt capacity, that thou mayeſt be wholly poſſeſt, wholly ſatiated, wholly raviſhed with the ſweetneſs of ſo great love: eſpecially, ſeeing thou art ſo very little, yet nothing leſs will ſatisfie thee. O therefore my moſt loving God, I beſeech thee tell me what may moſt effectually draw out my love to thee, conſidering what prevention of love, what privative, poſitive good things I receive from thee, infinite in greatneſs, infinite in multitude: It is a wonder that any one can think of theſe things and not be wholly ſwallowed up of love, wholly turned into love: But I ſee Lord, 'tis eaſier to ſpeak theſe things, and to write them down, than to do them. Thou therefore moſt good and moſt powerful Lord to whom nothing is difficult, give I beſeech thee, that I may more eaſily do theſe things in my heart, than utter them with my mouth: Open, I beſeech thee, thy moſt bountiful hand, and enable me, that nothing may be more eaſie, nothing more ſweet, nothing more delightful, than moſt effectually, and moſt affectionately to fulfil that which I ſpeak about loving of thee. Lord give me leave a little to preſume above my hope, and to plead with thee about thy magnificent goodneſs: humane friendſhip will not give the repulſe to a poor, wanting, begging friend; O therefore moſt liberal Lord, help me that I may love thee. Chriſtians, 'tis worth while to make it your buſineſs to climb up to this love extaſie. This you will find to be a compleating *rule*, an effectual *means*, and a ſingular *exerciſe* of exact and conſcientious walking.

I ſhall briefly name (I intended largely to have preſt) two arguments or motives to perſwade the uſe of theſe directions.

1. You cannot poſſibly get rid of your Conſcience *g*, therefore be perſwaded to get a good one, there's nothing more common than for

g Nec vi extinguitur nec fraude, adeò altè inhæret animo Tutiſſimus licet homo ſit, tamen ſecurus non eſt, ipſas tenebras nequitiæ, imò tuta omnia timet, multos fortuna liberat pœna, metu neminem. Exemplo ſunt potentiſſimi Imperatores, & qui arcani licentiam nacti, ſine arbitris, ſine teſtibus, &c. Epiſc. *Inſtit. theol.* p. 1. c. 3. p. 10, 11. *ipſa conſcientia propriis ſtimulis agitatur atque compungitur, & ſui ipſa efficitur accuſatrix & teſtis.* Origen. *περὶ ἀρχῶν.* l. 2. c. 11. p. 707.

wicked

wicked men to do what they can to extinguiſh Conſcience, they *flatter* it with carnal reaſoning; they *bribe* it with mock devotions, they *wound* it with hainous provocations, they *fear* it with cuſtomary wickedneſs, they *trample* it under foot by ſinning in deſpight of it; they *run* away from it, and will not endure to hear it, by diverſions; and yet they can ſooner turn their ſouls out of their bodies, than Conſcience out of their Souls: yea, amongſt all theſe indignities, it's as freſh, and active, as if it were not thus abuſed, it doth but watch it's opportunity, when it will be heard, when 'twill make that which was done perhaps forty years ago, as if it had been but yeſterday. What ayles the great Emperours of the world *h*, *that cauſe their terrour in the land of the living*, what ayls them to tremble with inward contrition? is it a vain fear? why then do they not ſhake it off? is it the fear of men? No, they are above humane puniſhments: Is it the fear of ſhame? no, the ſin perhaps, was ſecret, at leaſt man knows not the inward conſternation of their ſpirits. What's the matter? O they are haunted by the fury of their own Conſciences. Would wicked men but blab the gripes they ſometimes feel, even then when they out-face a Miniſterial or friendly reproof, there would need no more to be ſaid to evidence, that a Conſcience you will have, which will firſt or laſt do its office.

h *Inſigne viſum eſt earum Cæſaris literarum initium; nam his verbis exorſus eſt. Quid ſcribam vobis P. C. aut quomodo ſcribam aut quid omnino non ſcribam hoc tempore. Dii me deæque, pejus perdant quam perire quotidie ſentio, ſi ſcio. Ad ea facinora atque flagitia ſua ipſi quoque in ſupplicium verterant.——Tiberium non fortuna, non ſolitudines protegebant.* Tacit. *Annal.* l. 6. c. 6. p. 149.

2. Your own Conſcience will be your *beſt* friend, or your *greateſt* enemy (of any creature) unto eternity. There's *i* no greater *riches*, no greater *pleaſure*, no greater *ſafety* than a good conſcience. Let the preſſures of the body, the hurry of the world, the affrightments of Satan be never ſo great, they can't reach the Conſcience. A good Conſcience ſingularly chears the *dying* body, joyfully accompanies unto God the *departed* Soul; triumphingly preſents *both* Soul and body unto the *deſired* Tribunal. There's no more profitable *means*, nor ſurer *teſtimony*, nor eminent *Conveyor* of eternal happineſs than a good Conſcience. And on the contrary, there is no greater *torment* than of an evil Conſcience: though its *gentler* checks may be diſregarded, its *louder* clamours will make you tremble. O Sirs, what will you do, when Conſcience ſhall upbraid you with your *abuſe* of mercies, *incorrigibleneſs* under judgments, *contempt* of Chriſt, and *hatred* of holineſs? you can't now endure to hear what Conſcience hath to ſay, how will you endure it unto *eternity*? if one that killed his own Father *k*, could

i Vide Bern. de inter. dom. c. 22. p. 1070.

k *Parricidium vindicaturi Peluſii pro flagitii dignitate, nullum hactenus torturæ ingenium per duxerunt; non culeum, non vivicomburium: ſævius quid cogitarunt, piæ, ſcilicet, matris naturæ ferulam conſcientiam, ad ſummæ atrocitatis exemplum docti novam ſæviriam didicerunt, parricidam ſanctentes triduo cogi ſpectare occiſi eadaver, ut ſic puniretur enormiſſimum omnium ſupplicio, admonitione faſinoris.* Jo. Euſ. Nieremb *de art.* vol. 1 2. p. 150.

could not in some *Egyptians* account be more cruelly punished, than by being compelled to behold the murthered body for *three* daies, what a torment will it be to be forced to behold *every sin*, with every *aggravation* unto eternity? here in bodily sickness there's some *intervalls* to revive the Spirits; but hereafter there will not be a *moments* intermission of unexpressible horrour unto eternity. The Conscience shall *roar* under infinite wrath, and the sinner shall be kept from *annihilation* under it by infinite power.

Thus I have in a weak manner performed my promise in speaking to several *kinds* of Consciences, with *remedies* and *rules* which laid together, will I think amount to sufficient instructions, *How we may be universally and exactly Conscientious? viz.* 1. Get your Consciences *awakened* from their natural Lethargy *l*. 2. Preserve them tender from acquired *seardness* m. 3. Rectifie their *errours* as you would get cure of blindness *n*. 4. Resolve their *doubts* as you would a claim to your lands *o*. 5. Break from your *scruples* as from thieves on the road *p*. 6. Lay your head in Christs bosom to cure your *trembling* q. And then for the (7.) *integrity*, and (8.) *quiet* of your Consciences. Observe the rules proposed, as Punctually as you would Physitians bills in a tedious sickness. 1. Avoid *sinning* as you would a train of gun-powder *r*. 2. Be as quick in your *repentance* as in the cure of a Pleurisie *s*. 3. Live under the apprehended *presence* of the jealous God *t*. 4. *Examine* you hearts, as Princes sift out treason *u* *. 5. Pray for futable grace, as starving persons cry for food *. 6. Let every action be as an arrow shot at a mark *x*. 7. Think of God as of a *wise* Physitian *y*. 8. Be as *vile* in your own esteem as you are in the eyes of a captious enemy *z*. 9. Live upon *Christ*, as the child in the womb lives upon the Mother *a*. 10. *Love* God (as near as possibly you can) as God loves you *b*.

But if these rules, though thus *contracted*, be too *many*, and too *long* to be *always* remembred, that you may not be overcharged with that which should *never* be forgotten: I shall commend to you some (*Spiritually*) chymical extractions, and (if I might so express it) *Spirits* of directions, that may be to your Souls in your *Pilgrimage* toward Heaven, as your Ship-provisions in a *Sea-voyage*, generally *sufficient*, when others cannot be had. Plainly practise these *memorials* of direction in all your conscientious walking.

1. *Consult duty, not events.* There's nothing in the world for us to do, but to mind our duty. Curious speculation *c* that tend not to holiness, may be reckoned among your *superfluities*: but mis-giving predictions of what may or will befall you in the discharge of your duty, may be reckoned

l 1 Cor. 15.34
m Heb. 3. 13
n Eph. 4. 18.
o Rom. 14. 5
p Isa. 35 3, 4
q Isa. 40. 11
r Job 18. 15
s Zeph. 2. 2
t Ezek. 11. 5
u Lam. 3. 40
* Psa. 143. 7, 8
x 1 Cor. 10. 31
y Job 40. 2.
z Eph. 3. 8
a Gal. 2. 20
b Psal. 18. 1, 2
c Τὸ ζῆν ἄρα τὸ εὐσεβῶ ἀναγκαίων ἡμῖν γέμειν ἐπιστήμης δυναμένης ἀυξησιν, ἢ τὸν τελεσποίησιν τῆς γνώσεως, ἢ τὸ ζῆν, ἀλλὰ τὸ εὐζῆν περὶ πλείστα ποιήσεται μηδ' ὧν τοῖς δας μηδ' ὧν γέμον ἢ τῆς γονεῖς, ἢ τῆς πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ἀγάπης καὶ τῆς ὁσίου δικαιοσύνης προλιμῶν. Clem. Alexandr. *Strom. lib.* 6. *p.* 664.

reckoned among your grosser *iniquities*: and to venture upon sin to avoid danger, is to *sink* the Ship for *fear* of Pyrats, and must be reckoned amongst your *greatest* follies, your *worst* of sins. Is not their *reason* (questionless their *Conscience* is) dangerously *distempered*, that practically argue, this way of duty may *propably* procure mans displeasure, and therefore to prevent that, I'le take the course which will *certainly* procure Gods displeasure. Besides, by-waies will not lead you to the place you aime at *d*, but on the contrary, keep your Consciences from being violated, and you cannot be miserable. O how calm and quiet, as well as holy and heavenly would our lives be, had we learnt but this single Lesson; to be carefull for nothing, but to know, and do our duty, and to leave all effects, consequents and events to God. The truth is, 'tis a daring boldness for *silly* dust to prescribe to infinite *wisdom*, and to *let go* our work, to *meddle* with Gods: he hath managed the concernments of the world, and of every *individual* person in it, without giving occasion to any *one* to complain, for above this five thousand years and doth he now need your counsel? Therefore let it be your only business to mind *duty*. Aye, but how shall I know my duty? take a second memorial.

II. *What advice you would give to another, take your selves* e. The worst of men are apt enough to lay such burthens on other mens *f* shoulders, which if they would take them upon their own, they would be rare Christians. *e.g.* The very *outcry* of those that revile Godliness, who deal by the miscarriages of Professours, as *the Levite* by his *Concubine*, quarter them and divulge them; even *they* expect that those which make a strict profession of Religion, should be beyond *exception* blameless; and they [*even they*] scorn *those* that make any *defection* from their Professed strictness. And on the other side, those that are holy, they expect, that even graceless persons, should bear reproof, receive instruction, and change the course of their lives. In *middle* cases then between *these* extreams, what exactness will serious Christians require, where the *byas* of their own corruptions doth not misguide them? *David* was twice *g* surprised to pass sentence against himself by *remote* parables, (wherein he mistrusted not himself to be concerned) wherein this rule's too short, Add a third.

III. *Do nothing on which you cannot pray for a blessing.* Where prayer doth not *lead*, repentance must *follow*; and *tis a desperate adventure to sin upon hopes of repentance*. Every action (and cessation too) of a Christian that's good, and not to be refused, is sanctified by the word and *h* prayer. It becomes not a *i* Christian to do any thing so *trivial* *k*, that he can't

d οὐδὲ γὰρ ὁ τοξεύειν τῷ ἀστέρι βαλόμενος, ἢ τῷ Θεῷ τὸν λαγὼν κυνηγετῶν, συνεχὴς ἐστιν ἀλλ' ἀθελτερία καὶ μοχθηρία τοῖς ἐπιχειροῦσιν. ——— ὥσπερ ἔνιοι ὑπόδημα τῷ ποδὶ συνδιαστρέφεται, καὶ κρεῖττον αὐλίον οὕτω τὰς εἰωθυίας αἱ διαβάσεις συνεξομοιοῦσιν αὐταῖς. Plutar. Περὶ εὐθυμίας, P. 471. 466. e Τέκνον ἄλλο τι θέλεις ἢ γυνὴ; οὐδεὶς ἐσθ', ὃς οὐκ ἂν εἴποι, ὦ λίαν ἀνθρώπινον, ἀλλ' ὅταν τὰ αὐτῷ ἥκοντα ἀπαθῆ ἐνθῇ, ὅσιος, πάλαι ἐγώ, Θεοῦ ἐχέμυθος δὲ μεμνῆσθαι, τί πάσχομεν, περὶ ἄλλων αὐτὰ κρίνοντες. Epictet. c. 33. Simp. 158.

f Mat. 13. 4.

g 2 Sam. 12. 5, 6, 7. 2 Sam. 14 4, 14.

h 1 Tim. 4. 4, 5.

i Eph. 5 3, 4.

k Ὁ ἀνθρωπος ὁμιλῶν, ἀπολλύει τὸ παρ' ἡσίαν ὧν ἐπιχειρῇ σου; ——

Ὡς αὐτῷ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ἐν τῇ εὐχῇ αὐτῷ. Athan. *qu. ad Antioch.* p. 361 q. 77.

can't pray over it, and if he would but beſtow a *ſerious* ejaculatory prayer upon every *occurent* action, he would find, that ſuch a prayer would cut off all things *ſinfull*, demur all things *doubtful*, & encourage all things *lawful*. Therefore do nothing but what you can *preface* with prayer. But theſe rules are all defective, I'le therefore cloſe with an *Example* that's infinitely above defects.

Ὅταν ἴδητε μέλλοντα συμβάλλειν, πρόλαβε σαυτῷ, τί ἂν ἐποίησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, ἢ ζήνων ἢ ὁ ἀποφήσας τὰ χρήματα πρὸ σηκόντος ἐν τῷ διατεθῆναι. Epiſt. c. 51. Simp. p. 282.

IV. *Think, and ſpeak, and do what you are perſwaded Chriſt himſelf would do in your caſe, were he upon the earth.* The heathen they propoſed unto themſelves the beſt examples they *l* had, and therefore let us follow the beſt of *m* ours. There are many rare examples in *n* Scripture; but we may ſay of them, as 'tis ſaid of moſt of *Davids* Worthies, whoſe higheſt commendation was with this diminution *o*, *they attained not unto the firſt three*, I propoſe therefore neither great nor ſmall, but the *King of Saints* p: it becomes a Chriſtian rather to *be* an Example *q*, than to *follow* one: But by imitating of Chriſt, you will come as near as 'tis poſſible to the firſt three, for your *fellowſhip* ſhall be *with the Father, and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt* r, through the ſpirit of holineſs, who alone can teach you what it is to abide in *ſ* Chriſt, who was, and is, and ever *will* be our abſolute copy *t*. O Chriſtians! how did Chriſt *pray*, and redeem time for prayer *u*? How did Chriſt preach, out of whoſe mouth proceeded no other but gracious words *, that his enemies could not but admire him *x*? at what rate did Chriſt value the *world*, who did and taught to renounce it *y*? what time did Chriſt ſpend in *impertinent* diſcourſe, who made *their hearts burn within them*, whom he occaſionally fell in company with *z*? How did Chriſt go up and down *doing* a *good* to man, and *always* *thoſe things* that were pleaſing to *b* God *a*? Beloved, I commend to you theſe *four* memorials, to be as ſo many *ſcarlet* c. *threads* upon every finger of the right hand one; that you may never put forth your hand to action, but theſe *memorials* may be in your eye. 1. Mind *d* duty. 2. What's anothers duty in your caſe, is *e* yours. 3. What you can't ſay, the Bleſſing of the Lord be upon it, do not meddle *f* with it. But *above* all, as ſoon *forget* your Chriſtian name (*the name of a Chriſtian*) as forget to eye Chriſt *g*, and what ever entertainment you meet with from the profane world *h*, remember your Exemplar *i*, and *follow his ſteps*: *who did no ſin, neither was guile found in his mouth, who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he ſuffered, he threatned not, but committed himſelf to him that judgeth righteouſly.*

l Athan. *qu. ad Antioch.* p. 361 q. 77.
m Mic. 4, 5.
n Heb. 13. 7.
o 2 Sam. 23. 19, 23.
p Rev. 15. 3.
q 1 Pet 2. 12, 15
r 1 Theſ. 1. 7
ſ 1 John 1. 3.
t 1 John 2. 27
t Heb. 13. 8.
u Mar. 1. 25. & 6 46. Lu. 6. 12
x John 11. 42.
* Luk. 4. 22.
y John 7 46.
z Mar. 10. 21, 27.
a Luk. 24. 17, 32.
b Acts 10. 38.
c John 8. 29.
d Joſh. 2. 18, 21
e Acts 9. 6.
f Rom. 2. 21.
g Pſal. 129. 8.
h Pſal. 123. 2.
i John 15. 18, &c.
1 Pet 2. 21, 22, 23.

What

What muſt, and can, Perſons do towards their own Converſion.

Ezek. 18. 32.

Wherefore turn your ſelves, and live ye.

THe words are part of that ſerious Exhortation begun in the 30. *ver. Repent and turn your ſelves from all your tranſgreſſions:* continued in the 31 *ver. Caſt away all your tranſgreſſions, and make you a new heart and a new ſpirit*; and concluded in this verſe, *Wherefore turn your ſelves*, &c.

In the former part of the verſe, the Lord ſaith, I have no pleaſure in the death of him that dieth, I had rather men ſhould come to the knowledg of the truth and be ſaved, than dye in their ſins and periſh through their impenitency, *Wherefore*, or *therefore, turn your ſelves*, &c.

The Exhortation in theſe words, is back'd with a reaſon of great, yea the greateſt ſtrength, *viz.* Life, *turn and live*, that is, Ye ſhall live comfortably here, and happily for ever hereafter.

There be four Propoſitions deducible from theſe words:

1. *That man is turned from God.*
2. *That it's mans duty to turn unto God again.*
3. *That the Lords willingneſs that men ſhould rather live than dye, ſhould be a ſtrong Argument to move them to turn.*
4. *That thoſe who do turn ſhall live.*

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I shall wave all those great Truths, and come to that which the word seem to import, *viz.* A power in man to turn himself. It is a good rule which *Glassius* in his Philologie gives us, That active Verbs are given to those things which do not properly and by immediate influxe, do that which they signifie, *Sed certa tantum ratione concurrunt. God said to Moses, Lift up thy rod, stretch out thy hand over the Sea and divide it, Exod.* 14. 16. *Moses* had not power to divide the Sea; but, because there was a certain concurrence of *Moses* using the Rod according to divine direction, therefore it is attributed unto *Moses*, whereas it was the work of God alone, for *ver.* 21 its said, *The Lord caused the Sea to go back*: So in the work of Conversion, because man doth something about it, therefore he is said to turn himself, although the action be peculiar to the Lord, *Ephraim* saith, *Turn thou me and I shall be turned.*

In Philol. l. 3. *p.* 290.

Jer. 31. 18.

The Query here is, *What can, or ought persons to do towards their own Conversion?*

Something first is to be spoken of mans *power*, or *can*; and then something of what man *ought* to do.

For the first of these: There is a threefold power considerable, an Active, a Passive, and an Obediential power.

1. An Active power, as in fire there is such a power to warm; in a good Tree there is such a power to bring forth good fruit. This kind of power is denied to be in man, *Mat.* 12. 34. *How can you that are evil speak good things?* If they cannot speak good things; much less can they do good things.

2. A Passive power, as in Wax to receive the impression of the Seal, and in Wood to receive the engravings of the Carver. This power is not found in man: *Paul* saith expresly, The natural man, or *sonly* man οὐ δέχεται, receives not the things of the Spirit of God, and οὐ δύναται, neither can he. A stiff dead hand receives nothing, neither can it.

1 Cor. 2. 14.

3. An Obediential power, which consists in a capability to receive what form or impression soever the mighty God by his power shall put upon a Creature, such a power is in a stony heart to become flesh, its capable to be made fleshy when God puts forth his power. This is the power granted by Divines to be in men, and it is a very low power.

The Sacred Writ is plentiful in setting out the impotency of man, it tells us that,

He is not subject to the Law of God, neither can be, Rom. 8. 7.

That

That he cannot pleaſe God, *Rom.* 8. 8.
That he cannot come to Chriſt, *Joh.* 6. 44.
That he can do nothing without Chriſt, *Joh.* 15. 5.
That he cannot believe, *Joh.* 12. 39. *Chap.* 5. 44.
That he cannot love God, 1 *Joh.* 4. 20.
That he cannot do good, yeild good fruit, *Jerem.* 13. 23. *Matth.* 7. 17.
That he cannot think a good thought, 2 *Cor.* 3. 5.

Mans liberty or power is referrible to Natural, Moral, or Spiritual things: To the firſt, he hath great ſtrength: To the ſecond, ſome: To the third, none. A man freely doth natural and moral things, he can live ſoberly, and chaſtly, *quoad externos actus*, as to outward acts, he may abſtain from groſs ſins, Theft, Murder, Drunkenneſs, *&c.* he may come to the Congregations freely, hear the Word, and not ſtop his ears as the deaf Adder doth, but as to ſpiritual acts, *qua tales*, he is impotent.

For the better underſtanding of the Query, *What perſons can do towards their own Converſion*, I ſhall lay down ſeveral Theſes or Concluſions, which I ſhall make good by Scripture as I proceed.

1. *Concluſ.*

1. All diſpoſitions and inclinations to ſpiritual good which man had at firſt in his Creation are loſt and ruin'd by the Fall, *Rom.* 8. 7. *The carnal mind is enmity againſt God*: its ſo far from having inclination to God, or the things of God, that its not only an enemy, but enmity againſt God. And *Jer.* 2. 21. the Lord ſaith, *I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right ſeed; how then art thou turned into the degencrate plant of a ſtrange vine unto me?* They had loſt their original ſap and were degenerated into a wild Vine, and could not bring forth good Cluſters.

2. *Concluſ.*

2. Man being altogether averſe from good, the ſervant of ſin and death, ſold under ſin, Satans captive, and dead in ſin, is not able by his own ſtrength and power to convert or prepare himſelf thereunto, *Rom.* 3. 10. 12. *Rom.* 8. 2. *Rom.* 7. 14. 2 *Tim.* 2. 26. *Col.* 2. 13. *Rom.* 5. 6. *Joh.* 6. 44, 45. there muſt be the Fathers giving, and drawing, his gift and power, otherwiſe there is no comming to Chriſt. Men are, without Chriſt, in their natural conditions, *Eph.* 2. 12. they are dead to his life and righteouſneſs.

3. *Concluſ.*

The Lord calls for human endeavours, and would have men do more

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than they do, *Luk.* 19.13. To those which had the Talents, he saith, *Occupy till I come*, be ptagmatical, bestir your selves and improve your talents, so that at my return I may find you gainers: and he that hid his Talent in a Napkin, is branded for a wicked servant, *ver.* 22. and for a wicked and sloathful servant, *Mat.* 25. 26.

πραγματεύσασθε, this signifies, *negotiari in aliqua re ad lucrum, Budaus.*

4. *Conclus.*

Men may do more than they do. *Isa.* 64. 7. *There is none that stirreth up himself to take hold on thee*: they did not shake off lukewarmness and laziness, and rouze up themselves to take hold of God by faith and prayer. Its the complaint of Christ that he was hungry, and they gave him no meat, thirsty, *&c.* they might have done those things, and bestowed their estates upon Christs members, as well as others. Its evident men may do more than they do, for that they do not that in their healths, which they do in time of their affliction; then they will early seek God, *Hos.* 5. 15. Weak ones do more than stronger, many of weak parts act beyond those of larger abilities. Many complain in their sickness that they have lost time, and not done what they might: where is the man that dare plead it before the Lord, that he hath done all he could? Because men do not what they might, the Lord may not only deny grace unto them, doing *something*, yea, doing *much*, but justly condemn them, because they did not *what* was in *their power.* It is a common saying among Papists, Jesuites, Arminians and others, *facienti quod in se est, gratiam non denegat Deus.* This is no sound foundation, for it supposeth some men do act to the uttermost of their power. But [Whoever yet did all that was in his power?] Whoever went so far, as that he might not have gone one step farther? Did ever any read, hear, or pray so much, but he might have read, heard, and pray'd more? *Jeboram* might have waited on the Lord longer, 2 *King.* 6. *ult.*

Nos negamus nullos unquam fuisse bene utentes bonis naturæ propter Deum, itaque nos dubitamus esse aliquod meritum Congrui. Chamier. panstrat. Cath. T. 3. l. 14. c. 4.

5. *Conclus.*

Human endeavours are not required to co-operate with Gods grace, and so make it effectual, but his grace, makes their endeavours effectual when he pleaseth; Physical means make not Gods power effectual, but his power makes them effectual, and so its in mens endeavours. It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy, *Rom.* 9. 16.

6. *Conclus.*

All that men do before Conversion is not in vain, fruitless and to no purpose. When *Reboboam* and the Princes humbled themselves at the preaching of *Shemaiah*, they were reprieved and delivered from destructi-

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deſtruction, 2 *Chron.* 12. 12. *Ahabs* humiliation did adjourn the judgment, 1 *King.* 21. 27, 29. The *Ninevites* found favour with God upon their faſting and repentance, *Jon.* 3. 8, 9, 10.

7. Concluſ.

All the actings and endeavours of men whatſoever they be, are not *formaliter* diſpoſitions and preparations to converſion, ſo that converſion muſt neceſſarily follow upon them: For there is no neceſſary connexion between the actings of men, and divine Grace. The Lord hath no where ſaid, if you act ſo far, or be ſo diſpoſed, qualified, or prepared, *I will convert you.* If Gods grace did depend upon mens actings, then thoſe that are moſt Civil and Moral muſt be taken, and thoſe who are profane and rebellious muſt be left; but Phariſees were excluded, when Publicans and Harlots were admitted. Great ſinners ſometimes are brought in, who did nothing towards their converſion, when thoſe that did much are ſhut out. *Mary Magdalen* a great and infamous ſinner is taken, when the fooliſh Virgins were refuſed; they were Virgins free from the ſpots and pollutions of the world, they had Lamps, Profeſſions, they did much, they went out to meet the Bride-groom, they gat oyl into their lamps, they went to the door, and they cryed, *Lord, Lord, open to us*, and there was no opening to them. What preparations had *Paul* to this work of converſion? he was a blaſphemer, a perſecutor, and an injurious perſon, theſe were his diſpoſitions and preparatory works he had towards his converſion, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13.

Hæc ſunt opera preparatoria, quibus ſe offert Paulus. Jun. in locum.

8. Concluſ.

Thoſe that live under the means of grace, the adminiſtrations of Law and Goſpel, have ſome operations and gifts of the Spirit (which ſome call common preventing and exciting Grace) whereby they are inabled to do many things towards, and in order to converſion. The Scribe that was teachable, and anſwered Chriſt diſcreetly, was not far from the Kingdom of God, *Mar.* 12. 32, 34. He was nearer unto it, than thoſe had not the means. The preaching of the Goſpel is to make the converted meet for Glory, and the unconverted meet for Grace, to prepare and bring them to regeneration. *I have begotten you through the preaching of the Goſpel*, ſaith *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, 1 *Cor.* 4. 15. The preaching of it wrought much in them, before converſion it ſelf was wrought. *Balaam* living under the Law, and amongſt or nigh the people of God, was much enlightned, and greatly convinced, inſomuch that he deſired *to dye the death of the righteous.*

9. Con-

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9. *Conclus.*

No actings of men, or qualifications in men, are causes of conversion, do merit it, or make them congruous for it. They are not antecedent causes, or so much as *Causæ sine quibus non*; but the Lord doth, according to his Prerogative, work sometimes where they are not, as *Ezek.* 16. *When thou wast in thy blood, I said unto thee, live.* There was no cause, condition, or qualification in them to beget affection, or move the Lord to do ought for them. It was the time of his love, and he said, *live.*

10. *Conclus.*

Whatever the endeavours and dispositions of men be, they are only by way of order before Conversion, they are only antecedaneous thereunto on mans part, not necessary on Gods part, who can, and oft doth work where there be no such previous acts or dispositions, as in the dry bones in *Ezekiel* they had no disposition or power in them to rattle and come together, neither had the dead womb of *Sarah* any power or vertue in it to conceive.

11. *Conclus.*

Qui nobis ipsis nihil a Deo meriti sumus, quibus Deus nullam gratiam, nullam mercedem debet scil si jure nobiscum agat juxta conditionem servorum. Brugensis in loc.

Acts of men towards Conversion, are not to be rested in, as any satisfaction for sin, as making the person acceptable to God, or as inducements of God towards conversion; but we must acknowledg our selves unprofitable servants, when we have done all that is commanded us, *Luk.* 17. 10.

12. *Conclus.*

Mans quickning, believing, repenting, or turning, are not acts of man in part, and partly of God, but they are wholly of God, and from God. *You hath he quickned, Ephes.* 2. 1. they were dead, and could not quicken themselves, it was He, the Lord: So, *No man can come to me except the Father draw him, Joh.* 6. 44. This drawing or causing the soul to believe in Christ is wholly the Fathers work. And *Ephraim* saith, *Turn thou me and I shall be turned, Jer.* 31. 18. he could not turn himself; if the Lord had not done it, it would never have been done. *Paul* saith, *It's not in him that wills*, &c. *but in God*, &c. The will and deed are of Him, not of man, *Phil.* 2. 13. It is the Lord who is *causa totius entis. Every good and perfect gift comes down from above*, it's not a perfect gift if man contribute to it. The saying of the Father is sound: *Velle habemus, sed bene velle & in parte, & in toto, est à gratia.*

Nisi donum Dei esset, ipsa ad Deum nostra conversio non ei diceretur, Deus virtutum converte nos, Aug. de gra. & lib. Arb. Jam. 1. 17. August.

13. *Conclus.*

Man in the first act of Conversion is meerly passive. *Those who believe*

lieve are born not of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man, but of God; nothing of mans will comes in. Not *ultimum dictamen intellectus* did ſet the will on work here, but *the Lord begat them of his own will, Jam.* 1 18. So that mans will is not *ſemiviva & ſemimortua*, but *penitus extincta ad bonum ſpirituale*, and ſo *ad hoc* to this of Converſion, as the vital faculty is gone in a dead man.

14. *Concluſ.*

Mans will being firſt converted to God, and by God himſelf, converts it ſelf alſo unto God, *acta agit*, as a childs hand in writing, being acted by the Maſters hand, it writes. Hence man may be ſaid to turn himſelf, for the will being healed and made good, of unwilling willing, it hath an intrinſecal principle of willing good, and ſo dominion over its own acts, whereby it turneth it ſelf to God. Where there is the Fathers drawing firſt, there is preſently the Souls coming.

Theſe *Concluſions* being laid down, I ſhall ſhew you what men can do towards their converſion: but firſt I muſt inform you that converſion may be taken two ways.

1. Strictly for the infuſion of grace into the heart and will of man, whereby he is regenerate, and his will made good, here man and his will being meerly paſſive (for in this act *voluntas nec eſt libera nec voluntaria*) he can do nothing towards his own converſion in this ſenſe.

2. It may be taken *pro tota ſerie auxiliorum quibus ad eam movemur*. For all helps and means which further us that way; and in this ſenſe it's affirmed,

That men may do much towards their converſion, they may materially diſpoſe themſelves thereunto.

1. They may do much as Heathens have done, or would have done, had they lived under the ſame means, and had ſuch motives, as they have. The Lord tells *Ezekiel* that *if he had ſent him to a people of a ſtrange Language*; that was to the Gentiles, *they would have hearkned unto him*, Ezek. 3. 6. *they would have received him and obeyed his Doctrine*. It is certified from the mouth of Chriſt, That *if the mighty works done in Chorazin and Bethſaida, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented*, Matth. 11. 21. And that *the men of Niniveh ſhould riſe in judgment with the then preſent generation, and condemn it, becauſe they repented at the preaching of Jonas, and behold a greater than Jonas was there*, Matth. 12. 41. If one Sermon of *Jonas* who was one of the leſſer Prophets prevailed ſo much with Heathens, why ſhould not many Sermons of Chriſt, who is the chief of all the Prophets, prevail

vail as much, if not more with Chriſtians? *Væ torpori noſtro*, what will become of us? *Rahab* ſhewed kindneſs to the people of God, and that was antecedaneous to her converſion, *Herod* heard the Word gladly, *Mar.* 6. 20. And *Pharaoh* deſired the prayers of *Moſes* and *Aaron*, *Exod.* 8. 28.

2. They may ſit under a powerful Miniſtry, coming with reverence before God, not offering the ſacrifice of fools, but hear the Truth without being contentious againſt it, as they were *Rom.* 2. 8. They may let the Truth have a full ſtroak at them and their corruptions, *They may receive the love of the truth*, 2 *Theſ* 2. 10. *and not hold it in unrighteouſneſs*, *Rom.* 1. 18. So that they will not ſuffer it to have influence into their affections, and to break out into action.

3. They may hearken to the voice of Gods judgments and rods, when they are abroad upon themſelves and others. No man ſhould deſpiſe the chaſtiſement of the Lord, but every one ſhould hear the voice of the Rod, and who hath appointed it. The Prophet *Iſaiah* tells us, *That the inhabitants of the world will learn righteouſneſs, when the judgments of the Lord are in the earth.* His judgments are the beſt Schoolmaſters, and teach many good leſſons. *Waldus* was taught by the hand of God upon one of his ſociates, to become a new man. When *Manaſſes* was in affliction, he beſought the Lord, and humbled himſelf greatly, 2 *Chron.* 33. 12. *Vexatio dat intellectum*, when the Lord doth box and buffet us with his judgments, our underſtandings are opened and fear falls upon us: and though this fear be ſervile at firſt, yet it may end in filial, the ſpirit of bondage may become the ſpirit of Adoption.

Iſa. 26. 9.

Diſcite juſtitiam moniti, & non temnere numen. Virg.

ἀνδὸν δὲ τε πάτης ἐγνω.

4. They may obſerve the difference is made in mens lives after converſion from that which was before. Converſion is a ſtrange work, it makes a man another man. They in *Peter* thought it a ſtrange thing that men left their old courſes. In converſion Wolves are made Lambs, and perſecutors Preachers. How was it, that when *Paul* preached, *all that heard him were amazed, and ſaid, Is not this he which deſtroyed them who called on this name in Jeruſalem, and came hither for that intent that he might bring them bound unto the Chief Prieſts?* True, it was *he unconverted* did ſo, not *he converted*; now he was another, a new man, now he was a Chriſtian, and had other principles and practiſes than before, there was a great change wrought in him, and ſo in *Mary Magdalen.* Obſervation of ſuch examples have their uſe and energy: For Examples are ſtrong traces to draw men from wicked practices, *Why compelleſt thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews*, ſaid *Paul*

Ego non ſum ego. 1 Pet. 4. 4.

Præcepta docent & ducunt exempla trahunt.

Paul to *Peter*, Gal. 2. 14. *Peters* example was the compulſion. There is a kind of compulſion in examples, not violent, but alluring and attracting. The example of the believing wife may win the unbelieving husband, 1 *Pet.* 3. 1. A prudent gracious Wife gains much upon a graceleſs Husband, by her modeſty and obedience.

5. They may ſee what equity there is, that they ſhould ſerve the Lord, being his creatures, and ſervants, and not only ſerve him, but ſo ſerve him as they have ſerved their ſinful luſts, and ſomething more, ſeeing they depend on him. *I ſpeak after the manner of men*, ſaith *Paul*, Rom. 6. 19. It's rational, juſt and equal, that as you *have yielded your members ſervants to uncleanneſs*, &c. ſo now yield them *ſervants to righteouſneſs, unto holineſs*; it's reaſon, juſtice, and equity that you ſhould do ſo. Should not men take as much pains for Heaven, as for Hell, for their Souls as for their Bodies, for the Lord Chriſt as for Creatures? Should they not be as diligent to weaken their luſts as they have been to ſtrengthen them? Should they not be at as much coſt to maintain the pure Worſhip of God, as the Inventions and Traditions of Men? It's a complaint of the Lords, *Wherefore do ye ſpend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which ſatisfieth not?* They might have ſpent their money, labour, time, and ſtrength, and as much for true bread which would have fed their ſouls, as they did for that which was, as no bread, but rather huſks for ſwine. Ανθρώπινον λέγω. Iſa. 55. 2. Luke 15. 16.

6. They may remove and abate ſin in part, which is done by the contrary. Knowledg removes ignorance as light doth darkneſs, grief abates pleaſure, and fear boldneſs *in ſinning*: Patience keeps under paſſion, and faſting tames unruly luſts. When the ſtrength of a Feaver is abated by phyſical means, a man is diſpoſed towards health: and when a man hath gotten Moralities (which he may do) and by them made an abatement of his ſins and luſts, he is *materially* diſpoſed to grace; as the ground when plowed is for ſeed, though the ſeed be not yet ſown.

7. They may do *materially* what Converts do. There is no act conſidered in its meer nature and kind, which a true Chriſtian may perform, but one unconverted may perform alſo, and may have like diſpoſitions unto thoſe they have. They may love God, It's clear, *they loved God, who loved pleaſures more than God.* They may have Faith: *Simon Magus* believed: they may hate ſin in others, if not in themſelves. *Abſalom* hated *Amnons* uncleanneſs, they may *delight in God, and in his wayes*, *Iſa.* 58. 2. They may have a zeal for God, and ſuch a zeal as may prevail more with them than temporal things. The *Jews* were ſo zealous 2 Tim. 3. 4. Acts 8. 13. 2 Sam. 13. 22.

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Rom.10.2. of the Law, and for the Traditions of the Elders, that they would have ventered their lives for them: ſo *Paul* before his converſion, how zealous was he? *Acts* 22. 3, 4. *Gal.*1.14.

To come more particularly and cloſely to the queſtion. Though Converſion be wrought in an inſtant, yet men have ſome prævious diſpoſitions thereunto, who live under the ſound of the Goſpel, and obtain ſuch knowledg as worketh in them ſeveral things, which I ſhall ſhew unto you from *Acts* 2.37, & 38. *ver. And when they heard this they were pricked in their heart, and ſaid, men, &c.* Many preparative diſpoſitions or qualifications they had unto repentance or converſion, but they had not yet repented; for *Peter* ſaith, notwithſtanding theſe, *repent.*

1. Men may be convinced of ſin as theſe were, they found they had tranſgreſſed the Law of God, and were guilty before him, for they were pricked in their hearts. Men may have ſtrong convictions of ſin, and not converted from ſin.

2. They may mourn for ſin, and grieve that they have done ſuch and ſuch things. Theſe men had crucified the Lord Chriſt, put an innocent perſon to death, ſaw themſelves in an ill condition, and thereupon mourned and grieved ſorely, as the word *pricked* intimates; they had ſuch grief as pained and afflicted their hearts. There's a *How* ſet upon *Ahabs* humiliation by the Lord himſelf: *Seeſt thou how Ahab humbleth himſelf,* 1 King. 21. 29.

κατανύγησα *acutum animi dolorem ſignificat.* Piſcat.

3. They may be fill'd with fear, and dread the threatnings and puniſhments of God due to ſin. This was the caſe here; they had provoked the Lord againſt their ſouls, felt their conſciences condemning of them, apprehended the judgments of God near unto them, and ſo were poſſeſt with much fear leſt the Lord ſhould deſtroy them, and therefore ſay, *Men and brethren what ſhall we do?* We know not whither to go, where to hide our ſelves, or what to do, that we may eſcape the things we have deſerved, and fear.

4. They may confeſs their ſin, renounce it, and reform much; theſe Auditors of *Peter* being pricked in their hearts, ſaid, *What ſhall we do?* We have ſinned, and that greatly, we confeſs and acknowledge it before God and you, it was a curſed act of ours, and we abhor it, we will never do ſo hereafter. They were ſick of ſin, and vomited it up, as they
2 Pet.2.22. in *Peter*, and would change their minds and manners, and walk in any way the Apoſtles ſhould direct them. *The Merchant*, Mat.13.46. *ſold all that he had for the pearl before he bought it.* This ſelling all is made by ſome Interpreters to be his reſtraint from all inward ſin, and his conformity to all outward duties. This was much, and yet not more than unconverted

converted perſons may attain unto. *Herod* reformed many things. the fooliſh Virgins went far, as was ſaid before, they were Virgins free from ſpot and pollution, they had Lamps, viſible profeſſions, *they went forth to meet the Bridegroom*; they had ſome faith in him, and affection to him, elſe they would not have gone forth.

5. They may juſtifie the Law and the Lord; ſhould he condemn them, deal ſeverely with them; what ſhall we do ſay theſe perſons? we are guilty, we have broken the Law, which is holy, righteous, and good, and ſo is God likewiſe, who is the Author thereof; if therefore we be condemned, and muſt bear the curſe and puniſhment of the law, we muſt both juſtifie the Lord and it. Men may accept the puniſhment of their iniquity, and juſtifie the inflictors thereof, man hath no cauſe to complain of the puniſhment of his ſins. It's brought in by way of objurgation; *Wherefore doth a living man complain for the puniſhment of his ſins?* He may complain of his ſins, not of his puniſhment. Many Malefactors after ſentence paſſed on them, do juſtifie both Judge and Law. Lam. 3. 39.

6. Men may ſeriouſly conſider the nature of their ſin, what circumſtances it is cloathed with, what aggravations it admits, what crimſon and skarlet is in it; what light, love, mercies, means, ingagements it is againſt. What ſhall we do ſay theſe troubled ſouls? We have ſinned againſt the light of nature, the Law of *Moſes*, our own conſciences, the love of God and Chriſt towards ſinners, in that we have crucified Chriſt, a man approved of God, whom we knew had done many miracles, wonders and ſigns, *Acts* 2. 22. and deſerved not death, oh what ſhall we do, our ſins are ſo dreadful?

It's in mens power to lay to heart what wrong an infinite bleſſed holy God hath by their ſins, what mercies they keep from them, how greatly they defile them, what miſeries and miſchiefs they bring upon them, what a weight of wrath hangs over their heads for them. They may conſider what checks of conſcience they have ſtifled, what motions of the Spirit they have withſtood, what precious ſeaſons of grace they have neglected and ſlighted, what pains they have taken to ſatisfie a luſt, how dear it hath coſt them, how careleſs they have been of their ſouls, what a ſeparation their ſins have made between God and them They may mind and meditate on it, that mans life is ſhort, *the pleaſures of ſin but a for a ſeaſon*, that there is abſolute neceſſity of turning to God: *Except you repent, you ſhall all periſh.* That turning is acceptable to God, elſe he would not call for it, nor make ſuch gracious promiſes to it, as are in holy Writ.

7. They may come to it, to ſee no help in themſelves or in any creature whatſoever, *What ſhall we do?* ſay theſe wounded men, we cannot help our ſelves, we have no playſters that will ſtick, no medicines which will heal; we are wounded in our Conſciences, and as our hands, ſo theirs are too ſhort to help us; its not in humane power to bind up our breaches, *What ſhall we do?* men may ſee themſelves helpleſs, that they are without ſtrength, ſhut up under ſin, guilt and unbelief, children of wrath, and in a loſt condition, the Law curſing them and ſentencing them to ſuffer.

8. They may arrive to a reſolution of doing or ſuffering any thing to be ſaved: *What ſhall we do?* We are reſolved if we may find mercy, *and live*, to do whatever ſhall be commanded, to ſuffer whatever ſhall be impoſed. The pride of their ſpirits are broken, their hearts become teachable and tractable, and their reſolutions high for any thing to be done or ſuffered, ſo was it with the Jaylor, *Acts* 16. 30. when men are in ſtorms at Sea, or on their ſick beds at home, they reſolve if God will ſpare them, to do or ſuffer any thing for God and his ways, and their own Salvation.

9. They may conceive fair hopes of mercy. The Lord Chriſt being held out in the Goſpel, and freely offered to ſinners, this breeds hope in them, a *general* and *preparatory* hope: *What ſhall we do?* You told us that God had raiſed up that Jeſus we crucified, and made him Lord and Chriſt; and that whoſoever ſhould call upon his name ſhould be ſaved, therefore we hope there is mercy for us. Thus had they a hope kindled in them, and *Peter* in the two next verſes ſtrengthens their hope, ſaying, *Repent and ye ſhall receive the gift of the Holy Ghoſt, and the promiſe is to you and to your children.* Acts 2. 21.

10. They may thirſt after, and pray for the mercy hoped for. Such a qualification was in theſe men, *What ſhall we do?* You men of God we are a thirſt, and do intreat you to tell us where we may have water to quench our heat, mercy to pardon our ſins, balm to cure our wounds. The Publican in *Luke* hath left us his ſhort pithy and affectionate prayer, to imitate being in this caſe and ſtate, *Lord*, ſaith he, *be merciful to me a ſinner.* He was a ſenſible of his ſin and of his want of righteouſneſs, he had hope of mercy, and thereupon came to the Temple to pray; and pray'd earneſtly for mercy, and Converſion is none of the leaſt mercies of God, or leaſt needful for a ſinner.

11. Men being come thus far, they are to wait upon God for doing the work: when the pots were fill'd with water, the water was not made Wine, till Chriſt put forth his mighty power; neither were the men

men who lay at the pool of *Bethesda* cur'd, till the Angel came down and ſtirred the waters: ſo a man in this caſe is to wait untill the Spirit of the Lord come in, *& omnipotenti ſuavitate*, or *victrici delectatione* overcome his will, and ſet it for the Lord, and ſpiritual things: when this is, the work is done, and done without violence to the will; for its an omnipotent preſence prevails with the will, and its immediately made willing in the day of this power.

By theſe forementioned things men are in a proximity or nextneſs to Converſion, but not converted. It muſt be an higher power than our own, which lifts us up into an higher nature or ſtate than we are in at preſent. Though men may do much upon moral perſwaſions: yet not ſo much as to make themſelves Converts or ſpiritual, of Animal or Natural. Previous actions and preparative diſpoſitions, may make a man a picture of a Convert, not a true or living Convert.

Having ſhewn what perſons can, and may do towards their Converſion, it remains to declare what they ought to do.

The Word muſt or ought, the ſignification of δεῖ in *Greek* imports two things.

1. Neceſſity, there muſt be Hereſies, 1 *Cor.* 11.19. its no mans duty to broach or bring in Hereſies, but they muſt be; its neceſſary for the diſcovery of men approved.

2. Duty, God is a Spirit, and muſt be worſhipped in ſpirit and truth, its mens duty ſo to do, *Joh.* 4. 24. It was the Phariſees and Scribes duty to pay tythe of Mint, Anniſe, and Cummin, *&c.* therefore, ſaith Chriſt, *Theſe things ought they to have done, &c.* Mat. 23. 23.

Now then what perſons can do, they ought to do: Firſt, there is a neceſſity of it, we muſt do what we can; elſe we are ſloathful and unfaithful, and our damnation will be juſt, one thing is neceſſary, *viz.* to turn unto God, that our ſouls may be ſaved, here it will hold good, Turn or burn; if it be neceſſary to prevent burning in everlaſting flames, its neceſſary to turn, and ſo to do the utmoſt we can towards the ſame.

Secondly, its our duty, Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate, ſaith Chriſt, he commands it and lays this injunction upon all, ἀγωνίζεσθε, ſtrain, be in an agony, as Chriſt was in the work of mans redemption, ſo let men be in the works of their Converſion, put forth themſelves as they did in the Olympick Games, the Wreſtlers and Runners exerted all their might to obtain; and ſo muſt men about the work of their Converſion. The Lord who hath no pleaſure in the death of a ſinner, ſaith, *Turn your ſelves and live.* There is life in turning, and what ſhould not men do to preſerve or obtain life?

The

The Lord hath two great ends in saying thus: *Turn your selves and live ye*, although he know man is not able to do it.

1. That we may see how corrupt and impotent our nature is, and so break the strength of humane confidence thereby, and bring us to be sensible of, and throughly to bewail our condition. It is not so as some think and speak, *viz.* that whatever God commands, man hath power to do: What man ever kept the Law since the fall of *Adam*? And is not the Law given by way of command? If man could keep the Law, we might be justified and have life by it, *Rom.* 8.3. *Gal.* 3.21. but the Law can neither do the one nor the other, and why? Because man hath not power or strength to keep it.

Quicquid nobis præcipitur à Deo, ad illud faciendum sufficientem potentiam habemus.

Dixit Pelagius, quod homo solius liberi arbitrii viribus potest perficere dei mandata. Bradwardinus de causa dei, l. 2. c. 4.

2. To put us upon looking out for help from whence the command cometh. Hence it is that what the Lord commandeth us to do in one place, he promiseth to give in another, *Circumcise the foreskin of your heart*, Deut. 10.16. and God saith, Deut. 30.6. *The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart.* In the former verse to the Text, they are commanded to make themselves new hearts and new spirits, which they could not do, therefore in *Ezek.* 36.26. the Lord promiseth to give and put the same in them: *Repent and turn your selves*, Ezek. 14.6. and chap. 36.27. *I will put my Spirit into them, and cause them to walk in my wayes:* the spirit God would put in, should turn them from their Idols, and own wayes, and cause them to walk in his ways. The Lord doth therefore command such things, that our desires and endeavours being quickned, he may reach forth help unto us.

Ideo dat præceptum ut excitet desiderium & præstet auxilium, Leo.

Therefore let us apply our selves to all these means and ways by which the Lord worketh Conversion. Let us make use of all the ways forenamed, and especially hear the word preach'd, and pray, *Turn us, O Lord, and we shall be turned.* And see to it that we use the means in good earnest; we may do more (as hath been shewed) than we do. Its the counsel of him who was wiser than other men, that *whatever our hands do find to do, we should do it with our might*, Eccles. 9.10. that is, with our whole might; God must have the heart, the whole heart, and the fervency of it, Rom. 12.11. *Be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord*; lasiness and lukewarmness will not promote the work, fervour and diligence may further it much, see *Prov* 2.3,4, 5,6. and remember what the Lord Christ hath said, *Ask and ye shall have, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you.*

How

How may beloved Lusts be discovered and Mortified?

Mat. 5. 29, 30.

And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee, that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into Hell.

And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into Hell.

MY Text is a part of Christs Sermon on the Mount: I shall not hold you long in the *Context* or *portal*, but only *pass through* unto the words that I have read.

In the verse before, our *Saviour* tells us, that *Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed Adultery with her already in his heart.* This was spoken in opposition to the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, and may be urged against many carnal *Protestants*, that have but gross conceits concerning the *Law* of *God*; and in particular, that the outward act of uncleanness only is the breach of the seventh Commandment, *Thou shalt not commit adultery.* Now our *Saviour* corrects this mistake: That *whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed Adultery with*

with her already in his heart; not will do it, but he *hath done it already: there is a speedy passage from the eye to the heart:* And because the eye and the hand are many times *used*, as principal incitements to this sin, our *Saviour* gives his Disciples and us this serious and holy advice in the words that I have read, *If thy right eye offend thee pluck it out, and cast it from thee, &c.*

The words contain *a double Exhortation*, together with *a double Reason and enforcement.*

1. A double Exhortation: *If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee: if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee.*

2. A double Reason and Enforcement: *For it is profitable for thee, that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell:* and so again, *ver.* 30.

In the handling of these words, I shall first speak to them by way of *Explication*, and then by way of *Observation.*

1. For the *Explication* of them, I would entreat you to take into your thoughts these *particulars.*

1. We must enquire into the meaning of these two expressions, *the right eye*, and the *right hand:* most *Expositors* by far carry it, that these words are to be expounded *improperly* and *figuratively:* and here I shall not acquaint you, how *Popish* Writers abound in their own sense, concerning these words: there are sweet truths, that *kindly* and *freely*, without straining may be deduced from this Scripture; *like the Bee, I would not tear the flower I light on.*

There are *two interpretations* given of this place, that I shall take notice of.

1. There are some that by *right eye*, and *right hand* understand our neerest, and deerest comforts which we have in this world, which must be parted with for Christs sake, yet not *absolutely*, but upon this consideration, if they *offend*; *If thy right eye offend thee pluck it out, and cast it from thee, if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee:* Now this is *bona expositio*, a good Exposition, as our Divines distinguish, but not *recta Expositio*, a right Exposition: agreeable to the Analogy of Faith, but not suitable to the scope, and design of our *Saviour* in this place. Therefore,

2. There are others, that by *right eye*, and *right hand* understand beloved lusts, as hard to be parted with, as *right hands*, or *right eyes*: our Saviour mentions the *right eye*, and the *right hand*, because they are most prized, as having more than ordinary of spirits and natural heat, and

and so more fit for action; I am sure this may be said concerning the *right hand.*

Indeed I conceive it an hard matter to prove, that by *divine appointment* one hand should be more useful than the other: but as God hath given us two eyes, and two ears, so two hands, to use both *indifferently*, and that if need required the one might supply the loss of the other: if any, methinks the *left hand* should be preferred, because it is neerest the *heart*, the fountain of life and activity: but Christ takes them, as he finds them, as he doth in many other cases, and as we have ordered the matter, the *right hand* is more active and strong than the other, and so more precious: but to our purpose.

Some, I say, by the *right eye*, and the *right hand*, understand our beloved lusts; it is the usage of the Spirit of God in the Scriptures, in a *figurative way* to express corruption by the parts and members of our bodies: so St. *Paul*, *Rom.* 7. 23. *I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members?* and the same Apostle, *Col.* 3. 5. *Mortifie therefore your members, which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection*, &c. As the members of the natural body need *castigation*, 1 *Cor.* 9. 27. *I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection*, so the members of the sinful body need *mortification*: and here in the Text, sin is expressed by the *right eye* and the *right hand.* Rom. 7. 23. Col. 3. 5. 1 Cor. 9. 27.

2. *If thy right eye offend thee*, in the Greek it is σκανδαλίζει σε, *scandalize* thee, hinder thee in a way of duty: for you must note, that obedience and holiness is often in Scripture represented unto us, by a *way*; to give you one place for all, *Psal.* 119. 1. *Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord:* and men are said to be *offended*, when something causes them to stumble, or fall in this *way.* Sin is as it were a block or stone, at which men stumble and fall: *let him which thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.* Psal. 119. 1.

3. *Pluck it out, and cast it from thee; cut it off and cast it from thee*, a Metaphor taken from *Chirurgions*, whose manner it is, when the whole body is endangered by any part, to cut it off *ne pars sincera trahatur*: but before I leave these expressions, take notice of the *Emphasis* that is in them, in these particulars.

1. 'Tis not said, suffer thy *right eye* to be plucked out, or thy *right hand* to be cut off: but thou thy self, *pluck it out, and cast it from thee, cut it off and cast it from thee*: to note two things.

1. That we our selves must engage in the mortifying of our lusts: *Sinners with their own hands, must pull out their own eyes.* 'Tis not enough

to cry unto God for help, and in the mean time, to be careleſs and idle, as if nothing were to be done on our part: *mortification* is a work incumbent upon us, although we are impowred thereunto by the Spirit: *If ye through the Spirit do mortifie the deeds of the body, ye ſhall live,* Rom. 8. 13. We muſt mortifie, although by the Spirit; the duty is ours, though the ſtrength be Gods: ſo here, *if thy right eye offend thee, thou thy ſelf pluck it out, and caſt it from thee.*

Rom. 8. 13.

2. That we muſt be a willing people in this, as in all other duties: *a Chriſtian dieth to ſin, is not put to death.*

2. 'Tis not ſaid, if thine *eye* offend thee, obſerve it more than ordinary, look narrowly to it, but *pluck it out.* To note, that nothing leſs is like to do our ſouls good, than the mortifying, the killing, the cutting off of our corruptions. Let a mans *hand* be cut off it is a dead member immediately. It is not ſo with *plants* when they are cut off from their roots, they will grow and ſprout again: and ſo it is with the moſt *inferiour* ſort of *ſenſitive* creatures, for inſtance, cut *worms* into ſeveral pieces, every part will live, and ſtir; hence the Learned call them *inſecta.* When the head of a *fowl* is ſeparated from its body, it will live and flutter for ſome time: but this cannot be ſaid of the moſt noble ſort of creatures: this is a ſure rule in nature, *Unitas & indiviſibilitas eſt comes perfectionis, multitudo, & diviſibilitas, imperfectionis.* Union is a ſign of perfection, diviſibility of imperfection: the more perfect any being is, the more united it is to its ſelf, and the leſs any part of it can live *niſi in toto,* but in the whole: ſo that this phraſe is a great elegancy, to note the killing of our beloved luſts, *if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and caſt it from thee,* &c.

3. 'Tis not only ſaid *pluck it out,* but *caſt it from thee,* to note, that it is not enough for a man to leave his ſin for the preſent, but he muſt *renounce* it for ever. We muſt not part with ſin, as with a friend, with a purpoſe to ſee it again, and to have the ſame familiarity with it, as before, or poſſibly greater. *Amantium iræ amoris redintegratio eſt,* the falling out of Lovers is the renewing of love. We muſt not only ſhake hands *with it,* but ſhake our hands *of it,* as *Paul* did ſhake the Viper off his hand, into the fire: *pluck it out and caſt it from thee.*

Thus much for the *Explication* of the words, for I ſhall have occaſion onely to deal with the former part of theſe two Verſes at this time.

2. I am to give you the *Obſervations,* I ſhall ſpeak but a few words to ſome of them, that I may reſerve my ſelf, for that which I mainly intend.

I. *Ob-*

1. *Observation.*

That the eye, and the hand are excellent, and useful parts of the body of man.

You see here our Saviour Singles out these, from all other parts, as being very precious, *if thy right eye offend thee*, &c. *if thy right hand offend thee*, &c.

1. As for the *eye*, our Saviour tells us, that it is *the light of the body*: Mat. 6. 22. *the light of the body is the eye*: what is the world without the Sun, but a dark melancholly dungeon? what is a man without eyes? but monstrous and deformed, *monstrum horrendum informe, cui lumen ademptum*: the two eyes are two luminaries, that God hath set up in the *Microcosm*, mans little World: when God would express his tender love unto his people, he calls them *the apple of his eye*; *he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye*: and the like phrase St. *Paul* makes use of, when he speaks of the love of the *Galatians* unto himself, *I bear you record, that if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your eyes, and have given them to me.* I have read of the Emperour *Adrian*, that with an Arrow, by accident, put out one of his servants eyes; he commands him to be brought to him, and bids him ask what he would, that he might make him amends: the poor man was silent: he pressed him again: he told the Emperour, he would ask nothing, but he wished that he had the *eye* which he had lost; intimating that an Emperour was not able to make satisfaction for the loss of an *eye*. Zech. 2. 8. Gal. 4. 15.

Oh be very watchful over this excellent part! *make a covenant with your eyes*, Job. 31. 1. *Shut your eyes from seeing evil*, Isa. 33. 15. *Set no wicked thing before your eyes*, Psal. 101. 3. as the Apostle saith in another case, *Doth not even nature teach you*: God hath made a covering for the *eye*, that opens and shuts with a great deal of easiness, to teach us, that it is expedient sometimes that the *eye* be closed, and not holden open to every object.

2. As for the *hand*: it is the prime part for action, *Aristotle* calls it ὄργανον ὀργάνων, an instrument of instruments: without this, there could be no Cities, no Towns, no Merchandize, no Husbandry, no Manufacture; without this man would differ but a little from the *beasts that perish*; for what would his *reason* stand him in stead, if he had not an hand to improve it? The *Naturalists observe*, that man could neither do nor say, without this useful and necessary part: for if a man did not eat with his hands, he must, as a *brute* feed with his mouth, and by that means the lips would become so thick, that he would not be able to

speak with any distinctness, and indeed we find by experience, that they that have thick lips have an imperfection in their speech.

Oh improve this excellent part for God, a good life is expressed in Scripture, by a *clean hand*: *cleanse your hands ye sinners, and purifie your hearts ye double minded*: it is the greatest absurdity imaginable to plead a good heart, as many do, and yet have a foul and wicked hand: this is as if a man should say, here's a tree that bears ill fruit, but it hath an excellent root.

Jam. 4. 8.

2. *Observ.*

That offences are from our selves: or *the cause of stumbling and falling is from our selves*: some lust or other, some *right eye sin*, or some *right hand sin*; *if thy right eye offend thee*, &c. Sin unmortified will very much endanger a mans falling: truly if you would not have your *right eye*, or your *right hand offend* you, you must *offend* them: *pluck it out and cast it from thee*; *cut it off and cast it from thee*, if you would see clearly in Gods way, ye must pluck out your *right eye*, if you would walk evenly in Gods path, you must cut off your *right foot*.

3. *Observ.*

That sin is properly and to all intents and purposes our own.

If thy right eye offend, &c. *if thy right hand offend*, &c. the Apostle writing to the *Colossians* speaks thus, *Mortifie therefore your members, which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection*, &c. these sins, were their *members*: the whole *body* of sin is ours, and the *members* of that *body* are ours; there is a great difference between our *natural body*, and our *sinful body*: our *natural body*, is ours *quoad usum*, with reference to our use, but it is Gods *quoad creationem*, with reference to its *creation*. The body of man was originally and fundamentally *created*: now there is a twofold *Creation*.

Col. 3. 5.

1. When a being is made of nothing, this is called by the Learned *creatio immediata*, an *immediate creation*.

2. When a being is made of something, but that something is *materia inhabilis*, matter altogether indisposed for the producing of that effect, and so is little, if any thing more than nothing, with reference unto that which is made: *materia est aliquid in se, nihil tamen respectu opificii*: thus when God made the woman of a Rib, when Christ turned water into wine, when God made man of the dust of the earth, it was a *creation*, and this is called by the Learned, *creatio mediata*, a *mediate creation*, and our *natural body* still in a way of generation is Gods creature, but our *sinful body* is our creature: hence the Apostle, *mortifie your members which are on the earth*: and our Saviour in the Text, *If thy right*

right eye offend thee, &c. so that *sin is properly and to all intents and purposes our own.*

4. *Observ.*

That although all sins are our own, yet there are some sins that in a more especial manner may be called ours; namely, our *right eye sins*, and our *right hand sins*, or if you will: *Every man hath his proper, particular iniquity, his beloved sin.*

If thy right eye offend thee pluck it out, and cast it from thee: If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: and the handling of this Doctrine will suit the *Case*, that is my task this morning, *viz. How may beloved lusts be discovered and mortified?*

In the prosecution of this *Observation*, I shall follow by Gods assistance this method.

1. I shall enquire why sin is expressed sometimes in Scripture, by the parts, and members of our body, as in this place by the *right eye*, and the *right hand.*

2. I shall shew you, that our *right eye* sins, and our *right hand* sins, our beloved lusts, may in a more special manner be called *ours*, or that every man hath his proper, his particular iniquity.

3. I shall enquire how this comes to pass, that particular persons have their proper and particular sins.

4. The Use and Application.

1. I am to enquire, why sin in Scripture is expressed by the parts and members of our body, and particularly here by the *right eye*, and the *right hand?*

1. You must note that the whole mass of corruption in Scripture, is called by the name of the *old man*, and the *body of sin. Knowing this, that* Rom. 6. 6. *our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed.* It is called the *old man*: in every young man, there is an old man, and it is called the *body of sin*: now if sin in the lump and bulk be a *body*, then particular sins may fitly be termed the *parts* and *members* of this body.

2. Sin may be thus expressed; because as the natural body makes use of its several parts, for the managing and carrying on of those works that are *natural*, so corruption makes use of several lusts, for the effecting and promoting of those works that are *sinful.*

3. According to their notion, that hold the soul by creation, as I conceive, sin is conveyed into the soul at first by means of the body. Certainly the soul of man is pure, and undefiled, as it comes out of the hand of God. I do humbly propose to men of learning, whether that

rule

rule *corporeum non agit in incorporeum*, or that a body cannot defile a spirit, is not further to be taken into consideration. We find by experience, that as the soul communicates its affections unto the body, the body hath life, and sense, and motion from the soul, that of it self is a liveless lump of clay: So the body again hath a very great influence on the soul, and can, and doth communicate its distempers unto it. For *instance*, those that have *sanguine*-bodies are enclined to lust, those that are *cholerick*, unto rashness and passion; those that are *melancholly*, unto suspition, and tenaciousness; those that are *phlegmatick*, unto dulness and cowardize. So that sin may be in the body *dispositivè* before it be enlivened by the soul, though not *formaliter*; my meaning is, the body may have a disposition to defile the soul, before it is united unto the soul; and if so, no wonder if sin be expressed by the parts and members of our body.

4. Corruption looks at, and shews it self by the sinful actions of the *body*, and therefore may have its denomination by the *parts* of it.

Hence it is, that the Apostle, when he had concluded that the *Jew*, and the *Gentile* were both under sin; to make this manifest, he tells the *Romans* how sin discovered it self in the outward man: *Their throat is an open sepulchre, with their tongues have they used deceit, the poyson of asps is under their lips*, &c. We read in Scripture of the sins of the flesh, as well as of the spirit. *Having therefore these promises dearly beloved, let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit*: the sins of the spirit like so many plague-sores break out into the flesh. Wicked men are all over bespotted, and beleopar'd with sin: Lying is a spot in the tongue, pride is a spot in the eye, wrath a spot on the brow, bribery a spot in the hand, Idolatry a spot on the knee, yea, they are called *spots and blemishes*, 2 Pet. 2 13. not *spotted* but *spots*: sin it self is a *spot*, and like fire, it turns the subject it hath to deal with, into its own nature. One part of the body in Scripture is called a *world* of iniquity. *The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: How much iniquity is there in the world, when in this little member there is a world of iniquity!*

Rom. 3. 13, &c.

2 Cor. 7. 1.

Jam. 3. 6.

Thus much shall suffice to have been spoken to the first thing propounded, *viz.* why sin is expressed sometimes in Scripture, by the *parts* and *members* of our body.

My second work is to shew you, that our *right-eye* sins, and our *right-hand*-sins, our beloved lusts may in a more especial manner, be called *ours*; or that every man hath his proper, his particular iniquity:

If

If thy right eye offend thee, &c. *If thy right hand offend thee*, &c. Look as it is with good men, though they have the *seeds* of every grace in them, yet some one may be said to be theirs in an eminent manner: *Abraham* was eminent for *obedience*; *Moses* for *meekness*, *Job* for *patience*: Thus it is with wicked men, though they have the *seed* of every sin in them; yet some one may be said to be theirs in an especial manner. Wicked men in Scripture are as it were *marked* out for several sins, *calculo nigro*: *Cain* for his *Murder*; *Simeon* and *Levi* for their *treachery*; *Corah* and his company for their *conspiracy*, *Nebuchadnezzar* for his *pride*; *Manasses* for his *cruelty*; *Balaam* for his *covetousness*: or look as it is in the natural body, though every man hath blood, flegme, choler, melancholy, yet some humour or other is predominant, from which a man hath its denomination; so 'tis in the sinful body, some sinful humour, or other hath the predominancy: most men have some *peccatum in deliciis*, some sweet morsel, that they roll under their tongue, which they will by no means spit out, or part with. It would be no hard matter to shew you, that several Nations have their proper and peculiar sins, as the *Spaniard* theirs, the *French* theirs, the *Dutch* theirs. Look into the Scripture and you will find, that the *Corinthians* had their sin, which is thought to be *wantonness*, and *uncleanness*; and therefore the *Apostle*, in the Epistles that he writes to them, uses so many pressing arguments against this sin. The *Cretians* are branded for *Lyars*; the *Jews* for *Idolaters*: So your *Towns* have their sins, *Villages* theirs, *Cities* theirs; possibly *London's* sin, may be loathing spiritual Manna, neglect and contempt of the Gospel, a non-improvement of Ordinances.

3. I am to enquire, how this comes to pass, that particular persons have their proper and particular sins.

1. Men have particular *temperaments* and *constitutions* of body, and therefore they have their particular sins suitable to their *temperaments* and *constitutions*: you heard before, how particular *temperaments* enclined men several ways. Creatures in the general are naturally delighted with those things, which are fitted, suited and accommodated to the *genius*, and *frame* of their respective natures. As in the same Plant, the *Bee* feedeth on the *flower*, the *Bird* on the *seed*, the *Sheep* on the *blade*, the *Swine* on the *root*: the same seeds are not proper for the *sand*, and for the *clay*. Every thing thrives most where it likes best: so 'tis in this case, that sin is like to thrive most in the soul, that we make most of, that we are most delighted in, that suits best our *complexions* and *constitutions*. We must be careful here, lest we strain this too far, with some *Physitians*.

and

and *Epicureans* that hold the *soul* to be nothing else, but the *temper* of the body: but questionless this hath a very great influence on the better part. Hence some have adjudged it not fit, for *illegitimate* persons to be admitted into *Ecclesiastical* orders: and you know under the Law, by the appointment of God himself, *a bastard was not to enter into the Congregation, to the tenth generation.*

And I humbly conceive, that a toleration of unclean mixtures is not only against *Religion*, but against principles of *Polity* and Government: the children of filthy persons, for the most part proving degenerate, ignoble, lascivious, and by that means become the blemishes, the ulcers, the plague-sores of the body politique, Kingdom, and State whereunto they do belong.

2. There are distinct and peculiar periods of times, *distinct and peculiar ages*, that encline to *peculiar sins*; for instance, *childhood* enclines to *levity* and *inconstancy*, *youth* to *wantonness* and *prodigality*, *manhood* to *pride* and *stateliness*, *old age* to *frowardness*: you know diseases make men fretful, now *ipsa senectus morbus*, old age it self is a disease: If we take not heed, the sinful body will grow strong, when the natural body grows weak. I have heard of a good woman, something inclinable to passion, that used to say, I must strive against peevishness when I am young, or else what will become of me when I am old? And so *Covetousness* is a sin, that *old age* is very much addicted to. *Windelin* in his Moral Philosophy, *cap.* 25. discourses learnedly, *Cur senes sint magis avari quam juvenes?* when God is taking people out of the world, they cling fast about it, and cry *loth to depart*, truly this is no good sign. You know men that are sinking, and in a desperate case, lay hold on any thing.

3. Men have distinct and *particular callings*, that encline them to *particular sins*: For instance, a *Souldiers* employment puts him upon *rapine* and *violence*. And therefore *John the Baptist*, when the *Souldiers* demanded of him, *what shall we do?* tells them, *Do violence to no man,* Luk. 3. 14. *neither accuse any falsely, and be content with your wages. A Tradesmans* employment puts him upon *lying*, *deceiving*, *over-reaching his brother*: *Ministers*, upon the account of pleasing the *best*, as we many times *Catachrestically* call them, or the *greatest* of the Parish, are tempted to *flattery*, to *please men*, to *sow pillows under their peoples elbows*. *Magistrates* and *Judges* are tempted to *bribery* and *injustice*, if great care be not taken, their very calling and office may prove a snare upon that account.

4. Men

4. Men have distinct and *particular ways* of *breeding* and *education*, and upon that account have their *particular sins*. The child that hears his Father and Mother swear, is like to swear too. That child that hath frequently wine, and strong drink given to it by the Parents, when it is young, 'tis likely may get a smatch of it, and love to it, and so prove intemperate, when it is old. *Joseph* by living in the Court of *Pharaoh*, learned to swear the Court-Oath. Man is ζῶ ον μίμικον a creature very much given to imitation. Examples have a very great influence on men, both in reference to vertues and vices, especially to the latter; we catch sickness one of another, but we do not catch health: For instance, the Scripture speaking of the son of *Jeroboam*, tells us, *That he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, as his fathers had done, he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.* He writ after his Father's copy, and therefore the sins of his Father in a particular manner is taken notice of by the Spirit of God in that place. So 2 *Sam.* 6. 20. you have an account of *Michals* jeering of *David*, because he danced before the *Ark*, and you will find that she is called there not the *Wife* of *David*, but the *Daughter of Saul.* And *Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, how glorious was the King of Israel to day, who uncovered himself to day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelesly uncovereth himself!* Now why is she called there the *daughter* of *Saul?* because she had learned this wickedness from her father: We have woful experience of this in our days. Formerly people could say, *Psal.* 44. 1. *We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what works thou didst in their dayes, in the times of old.* Truly the people of this generation may say, we heard our fathers swear, and curse, and scoffe, and mock at the ways of God; in reason we may expect mens manners to sute their *education.*

2 Reg. 15. 9.

2 Sam 6. 20.

Psal. 44. 1.

Thus much shall suffice to have been spoken to the third particular propounded to be discussed, that is to say, how it comes to pass, that particular persons have their proper and particular sins, and thus much also for the *doctrinal part.*

4. The fourth and last thing is the *Use* and *Application* of this to our selves.

Use 1.

For *Lamentation* and *Humiliation* in the presence of God this day: we trouble our selves about other mens sins, Magistrates sins, Ministers sins, as the *Pharisee, Lord I thank thee, I am not as other men are, an Extortioner, an Adulterer,* &c. *or as this Publican.*

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And in the mean time, where is the man that considers his own iniquity, his *right-eye-sin*, or his *right-hand sin*: there are great outcries amongst us, what have others done? but who smites upon his thigh, and says, *What have I done? We search every where, save where our Rachel sits upon her Idol.*

Possibly some poor soul may say, Did I know this particular sin, this *right-eye-sin*, or this *right-hand sin*, the Lord knows, I would quickly *pluck out* the one, and *cut off* the other, and that brings me to

Use 2.

Of Examination, how this sin may be discovered; now to this purpose, take these marks, or rules.

1. It may be known by the *loves* and *tender respects* the sinner bears unto this *sin*: strong love for the most part, hath but one single object; affections are like the Sun-beams in a burning glass, the more united they are in one point, the more fervent: A wicked man hath a particular affection for his particular lust. As *Abraham* cryed, *O that Ishmael may live in thy sight!* So a wicked man, oh that this sin may be spared! This is his *Benjamin*: the soul is ready to say, here is one sin must be plucked out, and here is another sin must be cut off, and must this beloved Lust die also? all these things are against me. The sinner seems to repent of sin, and to condemn sin, and himself for sin: but when the time of Execution comes, the man is very tender-hearted; here's a reprieve for this sin, and there is a pardon for another sin; oh it goes against him to cut the throat of his darling lust! (*'Tis a woful case when a man will undertake to pardon his own sin:* this is *crudelitas parcens*, *sparing cruelty*;) and if it fall out, that his *beloved* sin die a natural death, that is, if the Adulterer, for instance, cannot actually engage in bodily uncleanness, as formerly, upon the account of old age, he follows it to the grave, as we do our dear friends, and heartily mourns that he and his *dear* lust must part.

2. It may be known thus; that sin that *distracts* us most in *holy duties*, is our beloved sin: you may know that cold is natural to the water, and that it likes that *quality* best, because let it be made never so hot, it will be still working it self to its own *proper* temper. Souls possibly may sometimes be warmed at an Ordinance, but they quickly cool again, and are still working towards their *proper* lust, the sin they like best. You may take notice in Scripture, that God, to speak after the manner of men, in an especial manner, *remembers* the sins of wicked men in the performance of holy duties. *They sacrifice flesh for the sacrifices of mine offering, and eat it,* Hos. 8. 13.

but

but the Lord accepteth them not. Now will he remember their iniquity, and visit their sins; as if a Felon or Murderer convict, should escape out of prison, and afterwards presume to come into the presence of the Judg: this brings his Felony or Murder into remembrance: and herein their punishment is *visible sin. They remember their sins in their duties, and so will God.* The people of God themselves are tainted with this. *Pride* was the *Disciples* master-sin; and whilst they were healing Diseases, and casting Devils out of other mens bodies, the proud Devil was stirring in their own souls: and our Saviour gives them a rebuke for that, *Luk.* 10.20. *In this rejoyce not, that Spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoyce, because your names are written in heaven.* Luk. 10. 20.

3. It may be known by its domination, its commanding power over all other sins: look as there is a kind of government in Hell, such an one as it is. *Beelzebub* is called the *Prince of Devils*; so in a wicked mans soul, one sin or other is still uppermost, and keeps the throne: all other sins do as it were bow the knee to this sin, hold up the train of this sin: are obedient servants to this sin, it sayes to one, *go, and it goes*; and to another *come, and it comes*: for instance, if *covetousness* be the beloved sin, lying, and deceiving, and injurious dealing will serve that: If *Ambition*, temporizing and sinful compliance will serve that: If *Adultery*, sinful wasting of time, and estate, and body will serve that. If *Vain glory* be the *Pharisees* great sin, *devouring widows houses under pretence of long prayers*, will serve that. As it is with a mans body, when it is hurt or maimed, all the ill humours will flow to the part that is ill affected. Hence it is, when a man is first wounded, he feels but a little pain, because he suffers only upon the single account of the division of the part: but afterwards the pain is encreased, for then he suffers doubly, upon the account of the division of the part, as also by the conflux of ill humours. When the soul hath received some gash, some hurt more than ordinary by its *particular* sin, all the sinful humours will make haste to feed that iniquity: so that this is the sin that carries it and bears the sway in the soul. In a word: the sinner hath the curse of *Cham* as it were pronounced upon him: a servant of servants is he, his other sins are servants to his *beloved* sin, and he himself is a slave to them all.

4. That sin that *Conscience* in a particular manner, doth chide a man for, that 'tis likely may be his *particular* sin; the *Greek* word for Conscience is *συνείδησις*, it signifies a joint knowledge, or knowledge with another. It takes notice of things together with God. Conscience is

Gods *deputy*, Gods *spy*, Gods *intelligencer*, pardon the word, in our bosoms, an exact *notary*, of whatever we think or do, a *co-witness* with God, as St. *Paul* is bold to call it, *Rom.* 9. 1. Now wouldst thou know thy *beloved* sin? hearken to the voice of *Conscience*: doth that condemn thee for pride, for passion, for worldlinesse, for persecuting the wayes of God? Oh remember, it is God *Viceroy*, honour it so far as to weigh, and consider throughly what it saith, 'tis likely, this may be thy *particular* sin, that which dishonours God most, if *Conscience* be any thing tender will trouble thee most: many a man deals with his Conscience, as *Felix* did with *Paul*, hearken to it a while, whilst it tells them of their lesser faults, or that they are sinners in the general, but when it rebukes them for their *darling* lust, though they cannot say, *go thy way*, as *Felix* to *Paul*, yet hold thy peace, and when *I have a convenient season* I will give thee the hearing!

5. It may be known by being *impatient* of reproof. *Herod hears John Baptist gladly*, till he preached against his *Herodias*: this is a *noli me tangere*; touch me not. The *Plant-animal*, or the sensible Plant so called, when it is touched, shrinks up, and contracts it self; the sinner shrinks when he is touched in the sore place. The *eye* is a tender part, and apt to be *offended* if you meddle with it. This is the reason why people are enraged against a powerful, soul-searching, soul-saving Ministry: most men are for Mountebanks, and Quacksalvers, that make use altogether of Lenitives, and healing Plaisters, but as for your faithful Chirurgions that according to Art, will probe and search, and cleanse the Wound, they cannot away with them: *I hate him*, saith *Ahab* of *Micaiah*, *He never propheseis good concerning me, but evil*: onely I shall add this, that man, especially that Minister that reproves another for his sins, had need to be blamelesse as much as may be himself: thus the Apostle intimates, *Thou which teachest another, teachest thou not thy self?* That man that is a teacher of others should teach himself, so much the more; we teach others when we deliver unto them Rules and Precepts, unto which they are to conform, we teach our selves, when we obey those Rules, *Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery*, &c. that man that hath a beam in his own eye, is not likely to pull out the mote that is in his brothers.

Rom. 2. 21, 22.

6. It may be known by this: it makes a man notoriously *partial* in his own case: *David* could allow himself another mans *Wife*, and could condemn one to death, for taking away another mans *Lamb*.

7. It

7. It may be known, by the *covers*, and cloaks, and *fair pretences*, that the sinner hath for this sin. Uncleanness, and intemperance, are but tricks of youth, and sowing his wild Oats: Luxury is magnificence, covetousness is good husbandry, pride is a piece of nobleness, and grandure of spirit: yea, which is more, 'tis humility; you have some that disparage themselves in company, and they call this humility, when in truth, it is the height of their spirits; like the Archer, that draws back the arrow, that it may fly so much the higher, and so much the further. 'Tis strange blindness, or deceit, or both, to call not yellow, or some middle colour, but black white: yet thus it is with many; they shape their darling lust, like those vertues, unto which they are extreamly contrary. Every wicked man is sins advocate, and will plead its cause *gratis*. Oh saith *Judas*, to what purpose is this waste, *This ointment might have been sold for much and given to the poor*: this he said, saith another *Evangelist*, *Not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.* Beware of speaking any thing, towards the justification of your selves in any way of wickedness: you know the malefactor is condemned before he is put to death, and so it is in the case of sin, *cum peccator justificatur, peccatum condemnatur*, when a sinner is justified, his sin is condemned, and after condemnation followeth execution: *Job* vindicates himself in this particular: *If I covered my transgressions as Adam, by hiding mine iniquities in my bosom*, &c. then *let thistles grow instead of wheat*: as if he had said, I did not hide mine iniquity as *Adam* did, I did not cover my transgression, I was open and ingenuous: the *Psalmist* saith, *Blessed is the man whose iniquity is forgiven, and whose sin is covered*, but then it must be by Gods hand, not ours.

Mat. 26. 8, 9.

Joh. 12. 6.

Job 31. 33. 40

8. If there be any one sin more than other, that the soul doth *readily close with*, that is its *beloved* sin: its *right eye* sin, or its *right hand* sin. *Sampson*, when all the world could not take away his strength, is easily perswaded by *Dalilah*. See how *Solomon* expresses the Harlots dealing with the young man: *with much fair speech she caused him to yeild, with the flattering of her lips she forced him*: the most she could do was to *flatter* him, and yet notwithstanding it is said, she *forced* him: sin works altogether by enticement; *Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed*, yet it is so powerful that it amounts to a *force*, as the request of a King amounts unto a command.

Prov. 7. 21.

Jam. 1. 14.

9. That sin which a man wishes were *no sin*, is like to be his *beloved* sin: the case of the young man in the Gospel is considerable to this pur-

purpose, saith our Saviour, *If thou wilt be perfect, go sell that thou hast,* Mat. 19. 21, 22. *and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come follow me.* Ver. 22. *When the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful*; that is, he was very much troubled, that there was such a truth as this, that the world for Christs sake was to be parted with. So Psal. 14. 1. *Psal.* 14. 1. *The fool hath said in his heart there is no God:* Oh saith the fool, That there was no God, that there was no heaven, that there was no hell, *Atheism* was the *beloved* sin in that case: first men wish there were no Deity, and then they judg so, and say so. Carnal affections after some time settle in opinion and judgment: 'tis possible for men by ways of unrighteousness, by a constant course of cheating and cozening, so far to shut up and imprison their natural light, and so to muffle their reason, and understanding; that at length they may cheat and baffle their own souls, and think it a piece of justice and righteousness so to do.

10. That sin which we think of *first* in the morning, and last in the evening, is like to be our *beloved* sin. God is the chiefest good, the prime object of our love: and therefore as he is *Alpha* and *Omega* in himself, so he is a so unto his people, the beginning and the end, the first and Psal. 139. 18. the last: they begin the day with him, *Psal.* 139. 18. *When I awake, I am still with thee*: they end the day with him, thus the Spouse, Cant. 3. 1. *Cant.* 3. 1. *By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth*: you Isa. 26. 9. have mention of both these, *Isa.* 26. 9. *With my soul have I desired thee in the night, yea, with my spirit within me, will I seek thee early.* Now this sin that I am treating of, like that ἄνομος, that lawless person that we 2 Thes. 2. 8. read of 2 *Thes.* 2. 8. *that man of sin, ver.* 3. opposeth and exalteth its self in the soul *above all that is called God*, and sitteth in the *seat of God.* A beloved lust is usually the sinners first and last, he gives it entertainment first in the morning, and takes his leave of it last in the evening: yea, this darling sin must be entertained and made much on in the Bed-Psal. 36. 4. chamber: the Psalmist speaking of a wicked man, *Psal.* 36. 4. tells us, he deviseth mischief on his bed: for the most part *that is a very friend, that we admit to our bed sides.*

11. That sin which most infests us, and troubles us in our *solitudes*, and *retirements*, that is our *beloved* sin, my meaning is when a man is alone, in his Closet, or in the Fields, and his thoughts run adrift: that sin which of themselves they move towards, and close with, that may be his beloved sin; the current of the soul is that way. O Christian, mark the workings of thy heart in private, and thou mayst possibly make some discoveries. When a man retires himself into some solitary place

place, it is usually absurd to trouble him: 'tis a friend indeed, that falls in with him, and offers his company in that case, *That sin is more than ordinarily beloved by us, that interposes in our privacies.*

12. And lastly, that sin, that we are willing to endure greatest *hardships* and *sufferings* for, that is our *beloved* sin: for instance, suppose *Covetousness* be the darling sin, what base, absurd, unreasonable offices, will it put a man upon: how scraping, and nigardly and dunghill-like will that man live, in his Town, or in his Parish; and expose himself to scorn and contempt from every one that knows him. Suppose *Ambition* be the beloved sin, how will a man in that case, swear and forswear, and temporize, and like the Boat-men, look one way and row another; almost any thing for preferment. If *Uncleanness* be the mans particular sin, how will he destroy his body, disgrace his name, overthrow his estate, for the gratifying of his lust? I dare aver, that the worst and basest drudgery imaginable, to scoure Kettels and Dishes, to tug at the Oar, to dig at the Mine, are honourable imployments, in comparison of this.

Use 3.

Is for Exhortation, and Direction, to press you to the mortification of your *beloved* sin, and shew you how it may be mortified: let me take up that Scripture again, *mortifie your members, which are upon the earth*, that is, let every sin be mortified; for you must know, as death is to the members of the *natural* body, so is mortification to the members of the *sinful* body. Now in death the soul is separated not only from one member, as it is in a *paralysis*, or numb Palsey, but from all, even from the principal parts of the body as well as others: so 'tis in spiritual death, there is a separation of the soul, not only from this or that sinful *member*, but from the whole *body* of sin, from the principal parts and members of this body, as well as others: the *right eye* is dead, the *right hand* is dead, it must needs be so, the one is *pluckt out*, and the other is *cut off*. Col. 3. 5.

A Christian must deal by his darling lust, as the *Israelites* dealt by *Adonibezek*, *they cut off his thumbs, and his great toes*, so must thou deal with this sin, hack it, maim it, that it may not be able to go nor stand, nor act, nor stir, if it were possible: and for that purpose take these directions.

1. Labour to have your heart steeled, with an holy *courage*, and *resolution* against this sin, it is upon the account of baseness and cowardliness

nesse of spirit, that people fall by the right hand of their spiritual enemy: shall I give you some instances for this? doth the Devil tempt thee to *uncleanness*, is that thy *right eye* sin, or thy *right hand* sin? take up
1 Cor. 6. 15. St. *Pauls* resolution, *Shall I take the members of Christ, and make them the*
Gen. 39. 9. *members of an harlot?* μὴ γένοιτο. *God forbid*; *Josephs* resolution, *How shall I do this wicked dnesse, and sin against God?* Doth the Devil tempt thee to *blasphemy*, or to *perjury*, or to *lying*, or to any other sin of that nature? take
Psal. 39. 1. up the *Psalmists* resolution, *I said I will take heed to my wayes, that I sin not with my tongue; I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked are before me.* Art thou tempted to *Idolatry*, to deny the truths of Christ, to make shipwrack of faith, and a good Conscience? take up the
Dan. 3. 18. *three Childrens* resolution, *Be it known unto thee, oh King, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image, which thou hast set up.* Every man should be a *Prince* over his lusts, and like *Joshuah's* Captains, should put his feet upon the necks of them: here courage, resolution, severity is very successful: and in special, exercise your revenge on your beloved lust: *fight not against small, or great* comparatively, but against this *kingly*, this *master* sin.

2. Let your repentance be *particular* for your *particular* iniquity: it is not enough to confess your sins, in the lump, in the general, but in prayer, you must take particular notice of your *right eye* sin, your *right hand* sin: thus *David* was *particular* in his repentance, *Against thee, thee*
Psal. 51. 4. *thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight:* this evil of murder, and this evil of Adultery, *pointing* as it were with the *finger* to *particular* sins. *Zacheus* makes a particular confession, of that *wrong* and *injustice*,
Luk. 19. 8. that he had been guilty of: *Behold Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have taken any thing from any man, by false accusation, I restore him fourfold:* this particle *if* in that place, may not be a note of *doubting*, but *suspition, if I have taken*, that is, seeing I have taken from men by false accusation? *si Deus est animus*, seeing God is a Spirit.

3. Beware of those things that may *occasion* the commission of this sin: for instance, if thou art prone to the sin of lying, *keep a door before thy lips:* if to gluttony and drunkenness, *when thou goest to a feast, put a knife to thy throat.* We use to say proverbially, *Occasion makes a thief*; this is true also in other cases, occasion makes a lyar: occasion makes a drunkard; it is a sign of a naughty heart to dally with occasions to sin:
Prov. 23. 31. *Look not thou upon the wine*, saith *Solomon*, *when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth it self aright:* It is not simply unlawful to look upon wine in the glass, but if this may occasion intemperance

perance, here is a law laid upon our looks: that command which forbids a sin, forbids also those things that have a tendency thereunto, as is observed by learned *Commentators* on the *Decalogue*, sometimes this is expressed in Scripture: the Commandment that forbids *Adultery*, takes in all causes and occasions thereunto: thus *Solomon* speaking of an Harlot, *Prov.* 5. 8. *Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house*: Harlots, like pestilential diseases, make the houses infectious where they are, and therefore *come not nigh the door of her house*: 1 *Thes.* 5. 22. *Avoid all appearance of evil*: I know there are some that dislike the translation of εἶδος by *appearance*, and rather think it should be expounded *sort* or *kind*; but whether the word be taken in a *Logical* notion, in the whole book of God is very questionable; and therefore why we should depart from the current and stream of Expositors, and the sense of our learned Translators, I know not. When God would forbid the sin of *injustice*, selling wares by false weights, mark how it is expressed, *Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights, a great and a small.* It was a sin not only to sell wares by one sort of weights, and take wares in by another: but to have *a great, and small weight in his bag.* God would not have us come near the sin of injustice. Hence also is that caution of St *John*, *Little children keep your selves from Idols*; if you would avoid Idolatry, beware of Idols, *he that would not hear the Bell, must not meddle with the Rope.* Deut. 25. 13. 1 Joh. 5. 21.

4. Pray unto God, that thou mayst not fall into such a condition, as may *draw forth* that corruption, that thou art most prone to: this was that which undid *Judas*, he was naturally enclined to unjust gain, and he had the Office of carrying the bag; and thus his lust was *drawn forth.* When a man is apt to be high-minded, it is a snare to be in an high place: when a man is passionate, it is sad to converse always or mostly with those, that are kindle-coals: that by provocations and unworthy carriages, are casting fire-balls into a mans soul, and he having a gun-powder-nature, is in a flame presently. And the nearer the relations in this case the worse. It is sad when my next neighbours house is on fire, but 'tis worse when mine own is on fire: it is a promise made to the people of God, that all conditions of life, and all passages of providence shall work together for their good; and fotherere on the contrary, when our conditions and relations make for the worse, especially with reference unto our souls, it must needs be very sad.

5. Learn to *suspect* things that are *delightful*, *Gen.* 3. 6. *The woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes.* Carnal pleasures are forbidden fruit: *Agrippina* poysoned her husband

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in that meat he loved best: the Devil tempts us with dishes sweetly poysoned. *Love and delight, pari passu ambulant*, walk together, and keep the same pace: many a man hath been undone by riches and honours and worldly comforts, *like the Bee that is drowned in its own honey*. Christians be careful; *Every one of us hath Eves sweet tooth in our heads*.

6. Labour to act that *grace* in especial manner, which is *contrary* to thy *beloved* sin: for instance, if *passion* be thy darling sin, labour to act the grace of *meekness*; if *excess*, the grace of *temperance*; if *uncleanness*, the grace of *chastity*: let me tell you, where grace is helped by nature, upon the account of a mans temper and constitution, there a little grace will go far: but when grace is to be employed against nature, it had need to be strong and active: your Watermen in some cases take their ease, and their Boats will go of themselves, but when wind and tide is against them, then they must labour at the Oar, *Hic labor, hoc opus*.

Mat. 15. 19. 7. Keep a watch over thy heart, *Prov.* 4. 23. *Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life*: so our Saviour, *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemy*. Godliness is but a fansie till the heart be reformed: Psal. 78. 34, 37. we read in the book of Psalms of *Israels* turning unto God; *When he slew them, then they sought him, and they returned, and enquired early after God, and they remembred that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer*: but was their conversion right? no, Ver. 36. *They did flatter him with their mouth, and they lyed unto him with their tongue*; and whence was this? *Ver.* 37. *Their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant*: therefore, mortifie sin in its rise, in its first principle, *lay the axe to the root*, there is more sap in the root than in the branches; there is more sin in the heart than in the life: one stroke at the root of the tree, conduces more to the deadning of it, than many at the body, or the boughs, or any other part whatsoever.

To quicken your industry in this, know, that the motions of original sin, as they are *permanent*, so they are exceeding *violent*, and *impetuous*. I remember the learned *Davenant*, *de justitia habituali & actuali*, *cap.* 5. gives this difference, between the remission of *actual* and *original* sin: when *actual* sins are forgiven, saith he, *penitus tolluntur, quoad maculam & reatum*, both as to their *guilt* and *filth*: but it is not so with *original* sin, the *guilt* is done away, but the *stain* remains; this is a sin that *dwells* in us, that abides in us, and abides by us; we shall not be rid of the *body of death*, till the *death of the body*. Sin is an ill tenant, it will not out till the house fall upon its head: now the certainty of the inherence of this sin, is an argument of the more efficaciousness of its operation,

modu

modus operandi, sequitur modum essendi: unquenchable fire burns more fervently, than that which may be extinguished; the reason why the *Angels* at this day do the will of God, in a more eminent way than the Saints on earth, is, because they have such a principle of holiness, as cannot be lost to Eternity, whereas the Saints on earth have a weaker principle of holiness, which may unhappily be abated, though it be recruited again: the reason why the soul of an healthful person, moves and acts with more vivacity, and energy, and power, than the soul of a sick man, is, because in the latter, it may be departing, and taking its leave of the body, or at least may be in danger so to do, whereas the former, being a man of an hail and good constitution of body, the soul may act, inform, enliven it many years.

8. Get a respect *to all Gods commandments*, Psal. 119. 6. *then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments.* The reason why men indulge any one lust, is, because they pick and cull their duties, and so indeed serve not the will of God, but their own choice. Oh, how many are there, that answer the Lord with half obedience, like the *Echo*, which makes not a perfect respondence of the voice, but of some part thereof? Many make such a difference amongst the *Tables*, as if only one side, or one part were of Gods writing: Oh Sirs, this will not do, this will undo; the man that like *Agrippa*, doth but *almost* believe, *almost* repent, *almost* conform to the will of God, that man shall be saved proportionably, *almost*. One sin unrepented of will cause you to miscarry to all eternity: one crack in a bell may make it unserviceable, untunable, and till it be new cast, it is good for nothing: one wound may kill your bodies, and so may one sin your souls. Oh Christians, what had become of you and I? if Jesus Christ had satisfied the justice of God for all but one sin? There is a Text in *Ezekiel*, that is usually taken for a place of the greatest mercy in the whole book of God, *When the wicked turneth away from his wickedness, that he hath committed, and doth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.* Ezek. 18. 27. You have to the same purpose, *ver.* 21, 22. of the same *Chapter*, but pray mark what follows, *ver.* 28. *Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgression that he hath committed*, no mercy to be expected from this Scripture, unless a man *turn away from all his transgressions*: 2 *Tim.* 2. 21. the Vessel of honour is distinguished from the Vessel of dishonour, by this character, that *it is sanctified and prepared for every good work*: and this is the commendation of *Zacbary*, and *Elizabeth*, *they were both righteous before God, walking in all the Commandments, and ordinances of the Lord blamelss.* Luk. 1. 6. Halting in Religion is a

troublesome, deformed, dangerous gesture; and there is no cure for this, like *cutting of the right foot.*

9. Lay hold on *Gods strength* for the mortifying of thy *beloved* sin: surely this is no easie work, see how it is expressed in Scripture, sometime it is called the *mortification of our members*; is to mortifie a part of the body an easie work? sometimes the *circumcising of the foreskin of our hearts*, Deut. 10. 16. did the *Sichemites* count Circumcision an easie work? by *crucifying of the affections and lusts*, Gal. 5. 24. was crucifixion an easie death? And here in the Text, it is called a *plucking out the right eye*, and *cutting off the right hand:* the Apostle *Paul* in the forementioned place, Rom. 8. 13. tells the Romans, *if ye through the Spirit do mortifie the deeds of the body, ye shall live.* He who is the fountain of spiritual life, is also the principle of this spiritual death: this is a work to be done by us, but *through the Spirit.* Deut. 30. 6. Hence in Scripture God is said to do this: *The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed:* and the Apostle expresses this *by circumcision made without hands:* Col. 2. 11. intimating that it is not a work of mans hands, but Gods.

Q. If any ask me, but how shall we lay hold on Gods strength?

R. By *faith*, great things are attributed unto this grace, because it lays hold on God, and sets God at work, 1 Joh. 5. 4. *This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith:* it overcomes not only the honours, and riches, and pleasures of the world, but the lusts of the world, of which you have mention, 1 *Joh.* 2. 16. Faith is a self-emptying-grace, a poor beggarly hand, rich only in receiving from another: something like *Davids* sling and stone against *Goliah* lusts: but in the name of the Lord of Hosts, and by his strength, even a babe in Christ through faith shall overcome the world: I must tell you that *Hannibal*, and *Alexander*, and all the glorious Victors that we read of, were but fresh-water Soldiers, in comparison of one that is born of God.

I shall only to what I have said, add a few Motives, to quicken you to your duty, and so commend all to Gods blessing.

Motive 1.

Right-eye sins, and *right-hand* sins are the greatest *hinderances* of the souls closing with Christ. When you slay any creature, the skin comes off with ease, till it comes to the head, and there it sticks, more than ordinary skill is required to get it thence. Now I must tell you the sin that I am dissuading you against, is, not only the *eye*-sin, and the *hand* sin, but the *head*-sin, and here conversion sticks. The sinner forbears many sins; and performs many duties: but when it comes to this, *Oh Master*, saith flesh and blood, *pity thy self*, beware what thou dost; what, be-

thine

thine own Executioner? *pluck out thy right eye? cut off thy right hand?* A mans sin is himself; to deny ungodliness, is to deny thy self; this is a kind of αὐτοχειρία, self-murder: *No man ever yet hated his own flesh.* Is there no getting to heaven, unless a man leave himself behind? This is *durus sermo*, an hard saying: As *Naaman* the Syrian, 2 Reg. 5. 18. *When my master goeth into the house of Rimmon, to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow my self in the house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing:* So the sinner, *the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing.* The young man in the Gospel tells Christ, *That he had kept all the commandments from his youth:* but when Christ said to him; *One thing thou lackest, go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasures in heaven, and come and take up thy cross and follow me:* Here he sticks: *ver. 22. he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved, for he had great possessions,* or his great possessions had him; Alas, this poor young man little thought, that notwithstanding his forwardness to keep the Commandments, he was under the power of worldly lusts. Oh Sirs! *there is great strength in a river, when it runs smoothly, and without noise.* Mark 10. 20, 21.

Motive 2.

As these sins are the *greatest hinderances* of the souls closing with Christ, so they prove the *greatest trouble* to the soul afterwards. Your *Eye-sin* will prove your *Eye-sore*, yea, and your *Heart-sore*: My meaning is, your conscience will suffer most upon the account of this sin all your days. Thus *Job*, cap. 13. 26. *Thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth.* When a mans conscience is disquieted and tormented for the sins of his youth, then he may be said to possess them: yea, it may occasion not only grief, but guilt. Of all sins, this is many times most unmortified even after Mortification: Soldiers that have received wounds and bruises when young, have smarted by them when they have been old. *There are many good souls, that after cure have gone to heaven halting on the old maim.*

Motive 3.

The mortifying of our *darling* lust, our *right-eye* sin, and our *right-hand* sin is a choice evidence of *regeneration:* truth of grace hath as much as any way been declared thus. *Paul* after conversion, becomes a Preacher of that name, which he before blasphemed. Those of *Ephesus* that were given to witchcraft, and sorcery, after their conversion, *brought their books together, and burned them before all men:* and many other instances of the like nature are urged by Divines to this purpose. *Cranmer* that had subscribed the Popish Articles with his right hand, afterwards Act. 19. 19.

28.

as a piece of revenge, put that hand first into the flames. A true Convert, of all sins, will be revenged most upon that, by which he hath most dishonoured God. His *right eye*, and his *right hand* shall smart for it; the one must be *plucked out*, and the other must be *cut off*, as we say of hunger, he will kill that, which otherwise would have killed him; I speak much of *mortification* and death to you this morning: Christians be not afraid: to dye thus, doth not argue imperfection: there is *corruptio perfectiva*, a corruption that tends to perfection: *I was alive*, saith *Paul*, *without the Law once: but when the Commandment came, sin revived, and I died.* This is expiring unto life, just as an Embrio expires after it becomes a child.

Rom. 7. 9.

Here I would add two *Cautions* under this head.

1. The *forbearing* of any outward act of sin whatsoever, is no evidence of *Mortification*, or *Conversion*: Sin may be restrained when it is not mortified; a chained Lion is a Lion still; a Swine washed, is a Swine still. In some sense you may be said to be a *new man*, and yet you may not be a *new creature*. This may come to pass partly from the sense of temporal inconveniences, partly from the clamours of natural conscience, or from fear of wrath. Such principles as these are not strong enough to kill sin, or to heal the Soul, but are like those odours which we use, to raise men out of a fit of the Falling sickness, but doth not at all cure them of the disease.

2. The mortifying of our *darling* sin is joyned with an universal hatred of *all* sin: A true Convert *hates every false way*, as the *Psalmist* phrases it, sin is often expressed in Scripture by *abomination*: it is so to God, it should be so to man; anger is only with reference to *particulars*, but hatred is πρὸς τὸ γένος against the kind; a godly man hates sin as sin, and therefore he hates every sin; the Devil hates goodness, as goodness, and therefore he hates all goodness, *a quatenus, ad omne valet consequentia*, a man may be angry with sin, and not kill sin: but as he that *hates his brother is a murderer*, so *he that hates sin is a mortifier*. When the *right eye is plucked out, and the right hand is cut off*, the whole body of sin hath its deaths wound. The man that keeps himself from *his* iniquity, will keep himself from every iniquity: *the heart with one hole reserved for sin is not sound.*

Motive 4.

Mortification is a duty becoming the *best* of Saints whilest they are in this world. I told you in the beginning of this discourse, that the Text was part of Christs Sermon upon the Mount; and if you consult the first and second verses of this Chapter, you shall find that it was preached to Christs own Disciples, *Vir bonus & pius, non est qui carnem non habet, sed qui*

qui carnem suam mortificat: a good man is not one that hath no flesh, but he that hath *crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts*, Gal. 5. 24. Gal. 5. 24.

It is with our sinful body, as with our natural body: If you cut a Wen, or any Excrescence of that nature, it will grow again, and again, and it will be an hard matter to be rid of it all your days: So though every day we be paring away our lusts, yet they grow again.

To close all, *Go on and persevere* in the subduing and killing of thy *beloved* Lust: Mortification is a work once done, and yet in this life it is alwayes a doing: There are some things that consist of an *iteration of multiplied acts*; as in Wedlock, persons are actually married at once, the Husband surrenders himself unto the Wife, and the Wife surrenders her self unto her Husband, and yet if they live together, suitably to that near relation, marriage is as it were renewed every day: there is a continual surrender of themselves each to other: So 'tis here, when the soul is first converted, the *beloved* sin is mortified, and yet there is a continual mortification of it: this is a duty that consists not in any one act, though never so good, never so vigorous: but 'tis a continued act of the whole life. 'Tis not killing sin at one blow; the strength of sin decays by degrees, it begins in the weakning of sin, and ends in the destroying of sin, *Sin dies a lingring death*, therefore let us go on in this great and necessary work. You know *Sampson* deny'd, and deny'd *Dalilah* for some time, and would not discover where his strength lay: but not holding out; he lost his strength and his life to boot: beware of Apostacy. *Crabs that go backward are reckoned amongst unclean creatures*, Lev. 11. 10. *Factum non dicitur, quod non perseverat* is a maxime, a Will not finished, is no Will: a Deed, unless it be signed, sealed, and delivered, is no Deed. The Sacrifice that was offered up unto God, was not to want so much as the tayl, *Lev.* 3.6. True Christians hate sin so perfectly, that they cannot be quiet till it be utterly abolished. First, they go to God for Justification, *ne damnet*: then for Sanctification, *ne regnet*; then for Glorification, *ne sit*. *Let us be faithful unto this spiritual death, that we may receive a crown of life.*

What

What Relapſes are inconſiſtent with Grace.

Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6.

For it is impoſſible for thoſe who were once enlightned, and have taſted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghoſt; And have taſted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come: If they ſhall fall away, to renew them again to repentance, ſeeing they crucifie to themſelves the Son of God afreſh, and put him to an open ſhame.

I Could ſay (Beloved) of the Interpretation and Application of this Scripture, before I begin to open it (containing the Doom and ſad Sentence pronounced againſt *Apoſtates* and *Relapſarians*) as once *Daniel* did to the King, before he opened his mouth to give the ſenſe of his *Ominous* Dream, *The Dream be to them that hate thee, and the Interpretation to thine enemies*; yet ſhall I not wiſh ſo much ill to *our worſt enemies*; but the Text be to them that *hate God*; and the Interpretation, only to the enemies and deſpiſers, or *deſpiters* of his *grace*.

Dan. 4. 19.

It is one of the moſt ſtartling Scriptures in all the Bible, and one of the moſt Terrible *flying fiery Roules* in all the Book of God, utterly con-

consuming the house of the hypocrite-Apostate *with the Timber thereof, and the stones thereof*, and dreadfully affrighting his truly Religious neighbour who *trembleth* at Gods Word.

The *Novatians* or *Cathari* abused this place of old, to shut the *Church-doors* and gate of grace, upon such as had fallen after their profession of Christianity. And many poor souls and troubled consciences have as often quite perverted, or misunderstood it to the shutting up the *gate of heaven*, and door of hope against themselves, after their bitterly bewailed falls or slips: but both unjustly.

But as *Josephs* Interpretation once of the same nights dream, when rightly applyed, did rid the *Butler* out of his misapprehended fears, and only left the *more secure Baker* under that execution which the other apprehended, but himself never *dreamt* of; so neither this, nor any other Scripture speaks a word of terrour to any *sin-troubled* soul, that trembles at Gods threats. But all the Prophets Propheſie good with one consent to these, and my word shall be like one of theirs. Gen. 40.

It was indeed once a joyful sight which *Jacob* beheld at *Bethel*, *Gen* 28. 12. *A ladder whose foot stood on the earth and the top reached to heaven, and Angels ascending and descending upon it.*

But here we see a *Ladder* whose *top* spires *toward heaven*, but the foot resteth in *hell*, where (seeming) Angels of light ascend, or such new strange *Gods ascend* (*as the* Witch once saw *out of the earth*) but black Apostate Angels descend, *Intrat Angelus, Exit dæmon.*

I am to speak of the Case of *Relapses*, and my Text is the fairest glass to discover so foul a sight that I know.

Here we have the rise and fall, the first and the last, the better and worse *part* of an *Apostate-hypocrite* described, 1 Sam. 28. 13.

1. The former, his *Rise*, his *first* and *better* part set out in five Particulars. 1. *Enlightning.* 2. *Tasting the heavenly gift*, as of some common faith, or repentance, or the like. 3. *Partaking of the Holy Ghost*, (which is not to be understood of the *sanctifying graces* of the Holy Ghost, but the *common*, or *extraordinary gifts*, as of Tongues, *&c.* of the sanctifying Spirit.) 4. *Tasting the good word of God.* 5. And *the powers of the life to come.* Had they had to these five steps two other more, *sincerity* at the bottom of the Ladder, and *perseverance* at the top, they had been safe.

He saith not ἀμαρτάνοντας or παραβαίνοντας, but παραπεσόντας, *ut cum edificium male sartum prorsus corruit* Paræ. in loc.

2. The latter, his fall, his last and worse part, is set out in four Things.

1. His *fall* is a *break-neck*, fatal *down-fall*. *They fall away.*] It is not an ordinary slip, or stumble, but a down-right, not *fair* fall, but a *foyl* given

given them by Satan, ſuch a fall as his own was at firſt.

2. The *irrecoverableneſs* of that fall, they are *paſt grace*, and grace and mercy hath done with them; *They cannot be renewed to repentance*, as is ſaid of *Eſau*, there is no place for their repentance, though he ſought for the bleſſing with tears, *Heb.* 12. 17.

3 The *certainty* of that *irrecoverableneſs*, in that it is ſaid to be *impoſſible*, &c. he doth not ſay, it is *hard*, or *unlikely*, or ſeldom ſeen, but is abſolutely impoſſible ἀδύνατον γάρ, it was never ſeen, or ever ſhall be. *Impoſſible* not ſo much *ex natura rei*, as ſome things are utterly impoſſible which imply a *contradiction*, as that *true* ſhould be *falſe*, *good*, *evil*; *light*, *darkneſs*; theſe impoſſible becauſe *inconſiſtent* with the *nature of the things* themſelves. But impoſſible *ex inſtituto Dei*, becauſe inconſiſtent *with Gods decree* and declared will, as impoſſible as we ſay, An elect, or true believer ſhould periſh, or an impenitent perſon be ſaved, ſo we mean impoſſible by reaſon of Gods irreverſible decree concerning ſuch.

4. *The cauſe* that makes all this *dead-ſure*, and ſeals the ſtone of this certainty, *Seeing they crucifie to themſelves afreſh the Son of God, and put him to open ſhame*, and make no account of the blood of Chriſt, and the grace and promiſe of the Goſpel, and of the comfort of the Holy Ghoſt, and are therefore ſaid to *ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, becauſe they directly ſlight, reſiſt, and oppoſe the gracious office and workings of the holy Spirit.

But I muſt ſtay no longer upon the words, by reaſon of that brevity expected in this Exerciſe.

Doctrine. Our Obſervation: It is the moſt fearful and dangerous condition in the World, to begin in the Spirit, and end in the Fleſh, to riſe and fall in *Religion*, to decay and Apoſtatize from grace. To have had ſome work of the Spirit, and the Word upon their hearts, ſo as to have light, and love, and taſte, and gifts, and ſavour, and ſeriouſneſs, and hopes, and fears, and after all to cool and give over: Oh how deſperate is ſuch a caſe!

To go to hell with ſo much of heaven, Oh what a hell is that! *Heb.* 10. 26, 27. *For if we ſin wilfully, after we have received the knowledg of the truth, there remaineth no more ſacrifice for ſin. But a certain fearful looking for of judgment*, &c. 2 Pet. 2. 20, 21, 22. *For if after they have eſcaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledg of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, they are again intangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worſe with them than the beginning; for it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteouſneſs, than after they*

they have known to turn from the holy Commandment delivered unto them, &c.

Such a thing there *may be*; *possibly* the Text supposeth it that such may fall, and *fall away*, totally and finally, only pronounceth an *impossibility* of their rising again.

Some are said to fall from grace, *Gal.* 5. 4. the *stony* and *thorny* ground did so in a *Parable*. *Demas*, *Judas*, *Saul*, *Hymenaus* did so in good earnest. A great Apostacy was foretold in the first days to let in Antichrist, 2 *Thes.* 2, 3. And in the reign of Antichrist more, 1 *Tim.* 4. 1. all are warned, *Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall*, 1 *Cor.* 10. 12. *Heb.* 12. 15. *Look diligently lest any fail of, or fall from the grace of God.* Some of *Johns* hearers after a while left him, *Joh.* 5. 35. Many of our Saviours hearers quite left him, *Joh.* 6. 66. Many of *Pauls* supposed converts were turned away, all they of *Asia*, 2 *Tim.* 1. 15.

Some have left their Love, *Rev.* 2. 3. Some left the Faith, 1 *Tim.* 5. 12. Some have turned after the world, as *Demas*, 2 *Tim* 4. 10. Some have turned aside after Satan. And would to God there were no Example to be given in our age and observation, it is that which the Professors of a true Religion are more subject to, than those of a false, *Jer.* 21. 1. *Hath a nation changed their gods which yet are no gods: but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit.* 1 Tim. 5. 15.

Now there are three falls to which men are subject.

1. Some fall as *Wood* or *Cork* into the water, sink at first, but get up again, being helped by the hand of divine grace, as *Peter*; or brought off by a Miracle of mercy, as *Paul* and his company after all hopes of safety were quite taken away. Mat. 14. 31. Act. 27. 20. and 44.

This the fall of the godly.

2. Some fall as *lead* or *stone* into the bottom of hell, as *Pharaohs* host into the bottom of the sea, and never rise again, having neither *promise* of God, nor *seed of God* to raise them up again, but make a final shipwrack of faith and conscience, and of their souls together. Exod. 15. 1 Tim. 1. 19.

This the fall of the wicked.

3. There is a *mixt fall* common to both, which is like the falling into an Epidemical Disease whereof many dye, and as many recover, of which in their order.

There are four kinds or degrees of falling, which the people of God are subject to; And four *kinds* or degrees to which the wicked are subject; and each latter is worse than other in them both. Four falls of the Godly.

1. The first and lightest fall of the godly, is that in their daily combate between flesh and spirit, set out *Rom.* 7. at large, and *Gal.* 5. 17.

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We cannot do what we would, but fail or fall short after our best endeavors. Our duties are imperfect, graces defective, our gold and silver drosse, *our wine mixt with water*. Sin deceiveth, surpriseth, captiveth, slayeth, yet reigneth not all this while. *It is not I, but sin that dwells in me.* I consent to the Law, *I delight in the Law of God, even in my inner man*, &c.

These falls or slips are unavoidable and involuntary, there is no Saint but complains of them, no duty but is stained with them. In our clearest Sun-shine we see a world of such Moats which yet hinder not the light and comfort of our Justification, and destroy not Sanctification. True grace consists with these, yea, is not separated from the assaults and indwelling of such motions. *Will we, Nill we*, said *Bernard*, *We are pesterd with swarms of these Egyptian flyes, and have these frogs in our inmost chambers.*

Velimus, nolimus, Irruit in nos Egyptiorum musca, & obstrepunt Ranæ in Cubilibus Regis. Prov. 24.16.

We are none of us *Supralapsarians* in this sense, but *Sub-lapsarians* all, yea, and *Relapsarians* too. *The just falleth seven times a day, by this infirmity and riseth again*, and taketh no harm, but is kept humble and depending thereby. Every *son* and *daughter* of *Abraham* is kept bound *under this spirit of infirmity*, to their dying day.

This first fall is but like the fall of a *mist* in a winter-morning, the Sun gets up and it is a fair day after.

This is the first fall: The second is worse, which is

2. An actual and visible stumble as to offence of others, yet occasioned by some surreptitious surprize of temptation, for want of that due consideration which we should always have: this *Gal.6.1.* the Apostle calls a mans being *overtaken with a fault*, who is *to be restored with a spirit of meekness; considering we also may be tempted*; such falls (or slips rather) all or most are subject to πολλὰ γὰρ πταίομεν ἅπαντες, Jam.3.2. *In many things we offend all.* We sometimes trip, or slip, or *miss our hold*, so the word signifies, and so down we come, but not out of choice. Thus did *Peter* slip or *halt*, *Gal.2 14.* when he did *Judaize*, out of too much compliance with the Jews, whom therefore *Paul* did rebuke and *restore*. Thus the Disciples slipt, when they in zeal to Christ would have fire fetcht down from heaven upon those that would not receive them, whom Christ set right with a spirit of meekness.

Luk. 9.54,55.

These slips or falls are like those of him whose foot is wrenched, or out of *joynt*, whence he halts till it be set right. Thus *Peter* is said to halt; he did not παραβαίνειν, only not ὀρθοποδεῖν: but when *Paul* had set his wrenched foot, he went upright ever after. Hence that word καταρτίζετε, *Gal.6 1. restore*] is a Chirurgeons word, to set him right, as a bone out of joynt. He that shall be censorious and severe against these

Gal. 2. 14.

two

two first kind of falls incident to most, let him, as *Constantine* said to *Aecsius* the *Novatian* Bishop, *get himself a ladder, and clime up to heaven by himself* he should have but a few come there else. Socr. l. 1. c. 7

3. The third fall is much worse, a fall from the *third loft*, whence like *Eutychus* they are taken up dead for the present, but they come to themselves again. These are falls into *grosser* and more *scandalous* sins which do *Vastare conscientiam*, set the stacks or Corn-fields of Conscience on fire, whereas the other two forenamed (especially the former) are such as *Tertullian* calls *Quotidianæ Incursionis*, these are very dangerous, and befall not all Professors (they had not need) but now and then one falls into some scandalous sin, but they not usually again into the same sin after sense and repentance of it. Thus fell *David* and *Peter* into foul flagitiousness, but not *deliberately*, nor *totally*, nor *finally*, nor *reiteratedly*. Sin raged indeed, and seemed to reign for the present, *Moses* hands grew weak, and the hand of *Amaleck* prevailed for the present: But a *seed of God* was in them, and they *could not sin unto death*, but were renewed to repentance, and their sins are blotted out. 1 Joh. 3. 9.

This fall is like the fall of the *Leafe* in *Autumn*; life remains safe: a Spring in due time follows, though many a cold blast first.

4. There is yet one worse fall than the former, incident to a child of God too, to be of the decaying hand, and to remit and lose his former fervour and liveliness.

And it may be he never comes (as the second Temple) up to the former pitch and glory. Thus *Solomons* zeal and love was abated in his old age, as his father *Davids natural* heat was in his age, that he needed an *Abishag* to lye in his bosome; so was *Solomons spiritual heat* cooled by the many *Abishags* that lay in his bosome: and though he was beloved of his God, his Sun set in a cloud, his last was not like his first. Thus *Sampson*, after many triumphs over the Philistims, was at length circumvented and betrayed into their hands, who bound him, put out his eyes, made sport with him, who though his hair and strength grew again, and he dyed in the Quarrel, and dyed a Victor, yet never did he regain his sight or liberty to his dying day. These kind of decays are dangerous, and make the people of God go mourning to their dying day, and they are saved as by fire. But are not inconsistent with grace. Ezra 3. 12. 1 King. 11. 4, 9, 10. *Incepit melius quam desinit, Ultima primis cedunt, dissimilis hic puer, ille senex.*

This is like the fall of the *hair* in aged persons; life yet remains, but strength, *native* heat, and *radical* moistness decay, and the hair never grows alike thick again.

These

Theſe are the fallings of the children of God, and there are four worſe than theſe follow, of the unregenerate, and each worſe than other.

1. The firſt whereof is a *final* fall (but not a *Total* at firſt) but *inſenſible* by degrees, *ſenſim ſine ſenſu*, grow worſe and worſe, as the *Thorny* ground, choaked with cares, or drowned with the pleaſures of the world. This proves like *Elies* fall, they fall *backward*, break their *necks*, and dye of it; and may with him be much lamented and pitied, but they are dead and loſt.

The four falls of the unregenerate.

1 Sam. 4. 18.

2. Some fall *totally* and *finally*, but not *premeditately* and *voluntarily* at firſt, but are driven back by the Lyon of Perſecution and Tribulation in the way, and they retreat. *Theſe endure for a ſeaſon*, as the ſtony Ground; and leaving God, they are for ever left and forſaken of him, 1 *Chron.* 28. 9.

Mark 4. 17.

This is like the fall of *Siſera* at the feet of *Jael*, Judg. 5 27. *At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down: at her feet he bowed, he fell; where he bowed, he fell and lay down dead.*

3. Some more fearfully, *Totally*, *finally*, *voluntarily*, *deliberately* but not yet *maliciouſly*. Thus *Demas* is ſuppoſed to fall, who of a forward Diſciple or Teacher, is ſaid to have become after an Idol Prieſt at *Theſſalonica*, (ſo *Dorotheus* reports of him). Thus fell *Saul*, who having rejected the Word of the Lord, the Lord rejected him, and *the ſpirit of God departed from him, and an evil ſpirit from the Lord troubled him.*

2 Sam. 16. 14.

Of theſe three laſt, I may ſay as *Eliſha* to *Hazael* of *Benhadad*, 2 *King.* 8. 10. *Theſe may certainly recover, howbeit, ſaith he, the Lord hath ſhewed me that he ſhall ſurely dye.* Theſe have not yet crucified the Son of God afreſh, nor done deſpight to the Spirit of grace, therefore it is not impoſſible they ſhould be renewed again to repentan ce.

Theſe are like *Sardis*, *Rev.* 3 1, 2, 3. may have a name *to live, but are dead*: Their works not perfect before God, ready to dye, yet are called once again to Repentance, otherwiſe certain deſtruction threatned.

But this is like the fall of *Haman*, whoſe doom was read by his Wife and beſt Friends, If once *thou beginneſt to fall, thou ſhalt not recover, but ſhalt certainly fall irrecoverably.*

Eſth. 6. 13.

And theſe end fearfully uſually, and unpitied ſpectacles of Gods wrath, to aſtoniſh and warn others, as *Spira* once.

4. The fourth and laſt fall follows, which is like the opening of the fourth Seal, and the fourth horſe appears, *a pale horſe, and he that ſate on*

Rev. 6. 8.

on him is called Death, and Hell followed with him. When men fall *Totally, finally, voluntarily,* and *maliciously*: Thus *Simon Magus*, *Julian* the Apostate, *Hymeneus* and *Alexander*, whose names are in Gods black book. Here the Gulf is *fixed*, and there is a *nulla retrorsum* hence. These are not to be renewed by repentance.

This fall is like that of *Jericho*'s walls, they fell down flat with a *curse* annexed, or as *Babylon*'s walls, with a *Vengeance*, both without hope of repairing. Or like the fall of *Lucifer* the first Apostate, without offer, or hope of offer of grace any more for ever; or like the fall of *Judas*, *who falling headlong burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.* Josh. 6. 20. Jer. 51. 58. Act. 1. 18.

There is also another kind of fall, of a *mixt* or middle nature, and to which side of the two, *Godly* or *Reprobate*, I should cast, it is not so eatie to determine, *A reiterated fall* into some foul act or course of sin: and herein I must proceed as warily as the Priest of old in a doubtful case of *Leprosie*, whether to pronounce *Clean* or *Unclean*, and by his rule I shall go. He was to shut him up seven days, and look upon him better ere he could give his *Definitive* sentence. If therefore, The mixt fall Lev. 13. 4. 5, 6. &c.

1. I see the sore be but *skin-deep*,] *Lev.* 13. 4. & 34. and have not corrupted the blood:

2. *If it stand at a stay* and *spread not* further] *v.* 5, 6. So also *v.* 23, 28, 34, 37.

3. *If all become white*] by repentance and mortification, I shall pronounce him *clean*. It *is a scab*, it is *but a scab*, *v.* 6. or a *scall*, *v.* 34. It is no deadly *Leprosie*.

But on the other side, 1. If it be *deeper than the skin*] (having taken the heart with the love and liking of it) *v.* 20. 25, 30.

2. *If it spread* further and further] by renewed acts, *ver.* 8. 27. 36.

3. If *there be proud raw flesh in the rising*, *v.* 10, 14, 15. and the man presumptuously live in it, and plead for it, I shall pronounce him *unclean*, it is an old Leprosie, *v.* 11. It is *not the spot of Gods children*. Deut. 32. 5.

Concerning Relapses, I shall desire you to take notice of these eight observations.

1. It is very observable that the Holy Ghost is very sparing in setting down in the Scriptures instances in this kind, well foreseeing how apt *flesh* and *blood* is to abuse and pervert such Examples to their own destruction: Such examples are as *Simeon* said of Christ, *set for the fall and rising again of many, and are a sign spoken against.* How have *Davids* and *Peters* falls emboldned many to fall and live in sin. There is Luk. 2. 34.

not

not one inſtance in all Scripture of any Saint that laid violent hands upon himſelf, leſt any ſhould preſume to do the like. *But one* Example of late Repentance accepted, leſt many ſhould preſume; yet one leſt any ſhould deſpair. Thoſe falls are not ſet as *Land-marks* to guide you, but as *Sea-marks* to warn you.

2. It is certain *Paul* returned not to perſecute the Church after his Converſion, or *Manaſſes* to re-erect Idolatry, or *Matthew* to the Receit of Cuſtom after he was called thence.

3. Nor did *David* and *Peter* fall again into the ſame foul act of ſin after they had truly repented.

4. They were only wicked ones as *Ahab*, *Pharaoh*, *Saul*, *Jeroboam*, who perſiſt and return to ſinful courſes, *from drunkenneſs to thirſt*, from thirſt to drunkenneſs. Of *Jeroboam* it is ſaid; *After this* (the Prophets warning, his Arm ſmitten, his prayer thereupon, the recovery upon the
1 King. 13. 33. Prophets prayer) *did he return again, and made of the loweſt of the people Prieſts of his high places, &c.* Neither warning, nor judgments, nor mercies could work any amendment in him.

1 Joh. 3. 9. 1 Joh. 5. 19. 5. It is certain that *he who is born of God doth not commit ſin*, ſo as to make a trade of it, returning to his Vomit: But *he that is born of God keepeth himſelf, and the wicked one toucheth him not.* He hath paid too dear for ſuch a miſcarriage, it was not ſo light a matter to lie under Gods wrath, loſe his former peace, nor was his comfort ſo ſoon reſtored, and Gods favour regained, that he ſhould hazard all anew, and buy Repentance at ſo dear a rate.

Deut. 29. 18, 19, 20. 6. Very dreadful is that threat of God: *If there be among you man or woman——or a root that beareth gall and wormwood: And it come to paſs, when he heareth the words of this Curſe, that he bleſs himſelf in his heart, ſaying, I ſhall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of my heart, adding drunkenneſs to thirſt. The Lord will not ſpare him, but the Anger of the Lord and his jealouſie ſhall ſmoak againſt that man, and all the curſes that are written in this Book ſhall lye upon him, and the Lord ſhall blot out his name from under heaven. And the Lord ſhall ſeparate (and ſingle him out) unto evil, &c.*

7. *Obſ.* Relapſes into ſin are like *Relapſes* into a *Diſeaſe* after hopes and beginning of recovery, if by taking cold, or want of heed taking, or other diſorder the diſeaſe return, and the man down again, this is worſe than the firſt ill fit, and long e're ſuch recover. But if as ſoon as he get a little ſtrength he fall into a new Relapſe, we reckon his caſe very doubtful, if not deſperate.

8. Yet it is not to be denied, but there are ſome ſins of *humane infirmity*

firmity which though repented of, a godly person may be again *overtaken* with and foyled, yet not his last end worse than his beginning. Thus was *Jonah* overtaken with his passion a second time, *Abraham* with his excusatory lye, the Disciples after a former rebuke a second time contending for superiority. Mat. 20. 25. with Luk. 22. 25.

The first fall in this kind I should liken to a sad and dangerous *fall*, by which one hath broken a *bone* in his leg or arm, which though it put him to much pain is well set again, and he becomes as strong as before, but more wary while he lives; *David* speaks of his fall into sin, that it was as a *breaking of his bones*. But a second fall, is like the breaking of the bone the second time, which is more hardly set, and puts to more pain, and it may be the man feels it at times to his dying day. Psal. 51.

But a third or more frequent relapse, is like the putting of an arm out of joynt, again and again, not being well bound and looked to in time, becomes habitually loose and never keeps the place: so it is here, *Crebrous* and frequent acts of sin beget an habit, and custom in sin, and then as soon *may the Ethiopian change his skin, and the Leopard his spots, as one accustomed to do evil, ever learn to do well.* Jer. 13. 23.

Bernard describes the steps of sin, how it comes to its height. First time it is *importable*, next time *heavy*, no more *importable*, then *easie*, then *light*, then *sweet*, at last *necessary*; and what was at first *importable* to be committed, is now *impossible* to be omitted. And St. *Austin* confirms this by a story of his own Mother, who by sipping of the Cup at first when she filled the Wine, learnt at last to take almost whole Cups; *Qui modica non spernit paulatim decidit*, is his good note upon it, He that makes a small matter of small sins, is in the ready way to fall into the greatest. Every new relapse into a former sin, is like the adding of a new figure to the first *Cypher*, which raiseth the sinners account *ten* or an *hundred* times more.

Primo importabile, *processu temporis* grave, *paulo post* leve, *postea placet & suave est, ad extremum, quod erat importabile ad faciendum, est impossibile, ad continendum*, Bern. de Conf. *Ex voluntate perversa facta est consuetudo, & dum consuetudini non resistitur facta est necessitas.* Aug. conf. l. 8. *Ad illud modicum, quotidiana modica addendo in eam consuetudinem lapsa erat, ut prope jam plenos mero caliculos inhianter hauriret.* Confes. lib. 9.

Therefore if thou hast been overtaken once, stop and be humbled, and say, *once I have spoken*, or done amiss, *but I will not answer* to plead for my self; *beware* the second time, the second fall, as the *second blow makes the fray*: but if a second time, say *yea twice, but I will proceed no further*: but be sure thou take heed of drawing sin with *a threefold cord*, or *cart-rope*: this *threefold cord is not easily broken*, take heed of a third act; *fear, and the pit, and the snare are before thee*: Oh bold and presumptuous sinner: if thou escape the *fear* (of the *first* act) thou Job 40. 4, 5. Isa. 5. 18. Eccl. 4. 12. Isa. 24. 17, 18.

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mayst perish in the *pit* (for the *second*) but if thou escape the *pit*, thou
Psal. 11. 6. wilt be taken in the *snare* (the *third* time) *upon the ungodly, God raineth snares*, God gives once to a reprobate mind, and they are gone. Think
Judg. 16. 20. not after a third or fourth act of presumptuous sin, to go and *shake thy self* (by prayer and repentance) as *Sampson* once, and that thy strength may return to thee to be delivered from these *Philistines* which lye in wait for thee, he did so *but wist not* (till he found it by woful experience) *that the Lord was departed from him*; so may it be with thee, therefore be warned.

Use 1. This 1. informs us that possible it is for men (yea, too ordinary) to fall from grace: The Text supposeth it; and in another place, *Heb* 12. 15. the Apostle *Items* us to *look diligently lest any fall from the grace of God*, the Angels did so at first, and *Adam* soon after, and that which was *Morbus Angelicus* then, is *Morbus Anglicus* now. The Lord may complain of us, as justly as ever he did of Israel, *My people are bent to back sliding from me*, Hosea 11. 7. and Isaiah 1. 5. *Why should ye be smitten any more, ye will revolt more and more:* and Jer. 8. 5. *Why is this people slidden back by perpetual backslidings? they hold fast deceit, they refuse to return.* This is, and of late hath been the case and Epidemical Disease of *England*. It is no new thing to see the sons of fallen man to fall, and fall away. *Saul, Joash, Amaziah, Judas, Demas, Alexander* fell away of old. Of all Israel that came out of *Egypt* with *Moses* and *Aaron*, only two, *Caleb* and *Joshuah*, *followed God fully*. Numb. 14. 24. Of the four grounds in the Parable only one held out. Many of *John Baptists* hearers left him and fell away, *Joh.* 5. 35. Many of Christs hearers and disciples, *Joh.* 6. 65. Many of *Peters*, 2 Pet. 2. 20. Many of *Pauls*, 2 Tim. 1, 15. and 1 *Tim.* 5. 15. Many of *John* the Evangelists hearers, 1 *Joh.* 2. 19. *They went out from us, because they were not of us, for had they been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out that they might be made manifest, that they were not all of us.* But none of these were ever sincere Christians and sound at the heart.

We wonder not to see an house built on the sand to fall, or seed not having root wither, or trees in the parched Wilderness decay, *Jer.* 17. 6. or Meteors vanish, or Blazing-stars fall, or Clouds without rain blown about, or Wells without Springs dried up. So for Hypocrites to prove Apostates no strange thing, and utterly to fall away. There are four *wills* some have observed. 1. The *Divine* will never *alters* or *turns*. 2. The *Angels* will hath *turned*, never *returns*. 3. The will of *man* faln *turned*, and in conversion *returns*. 4. The will of *Apostates*, after that grace received

ceived and abused *turns* away and never *returns*; but becomes like the fallen Angels.

2. Even godly and gracious persons are subject to fall, and therefore must not be secure, they *must work out their salvation with fear and trembling*, Phil. 2. 12. they are bidden to *fear lest they should fall short*, Heb. 4. 1. *Stand fast*, 1 Cor. 16. 13. *Take heed lest they* fall, 1 Cor. 10. 12. *Look diligently lest any fail of* (or *fall from*, so is the other reading) *the grace of God*, Heb. 12. 15. *Take the whole armour of God that they may be able to stand*, Eph. 6. 12.

Even the very Elect have this root of bitterness and seeds of Apostacy within them. Even *Peter* had *sunk* if Christ had not put forth his hand to save him from the water, *Mat.* 14. 31. and had been *winnowed as chaff*, if Christ had not prayed for him that his *faith should not fail.* Luk. 22. 31, 32.

Let not him therefore that puts on his harness boast, as he that puts it off, 1 *King.* 20. 11.

3. Yet a truly regenerate soul, a plant of Gods planting by the waterside; a plant or graffe grafted into Christ, and rooted in Christ, can never fall away totally or finally: *Peter* could not when Christ prayed for him. The Elect cannot, *Mat.* 24. 24. In the general Apostacy of the Christian world, and the greatest persecutions under *Rome-pagan*, and *Rome-pseudo-Christian* (Antichristian both times) when all the world *wandred after the Dragon and the Beast*: they who had their names written in the Lambs book held out, and warped not, *Rev.* 13. 8. and 17. 8. The Elect are as Mount *Sion* that cannot be moved, and are as fixed stars that fall not. The house on the Rock stands firm in all weathers. The Tree by the waters side, *Jer.* 17. 8. Seed in good ground, *Mat.* 13. They who have *a seed of God in them cannot so sin*, 1 Joh. 3. 9. And they that *are born* of God, 1 *Joh.* 5. 18. They who are in the hand of Christ, *none can pluck them out*, Joh. 10. 28.

Yet as to the fallings of the Elect (not presuming to tell you the *minimum* or *summum quod sic*) we shall make these concessions, or observations.

1. We grant that the godly, as well as others, are subject to this *falling-sickness*, having seeds of Apostacy in them; and would certainly fall irrecoverably, if left to themselves. *By strength* (his own) *no man shall prevail* or stand, 1 *Sam.* 29. 1 *Position.* *In te stas & non stas*, Aug.

2. Grace received truly sanctifying is not for its measure so great, or for its nature so immutable and invincible, but might be overborn and wounded, if not divinely supported and continually supplyed; as the 2 *Posit.*

Widows oyl kept from decay, fed by a ſpring of *Auxiliary* grace; as
Gen. 49. 22, 23, 24. *Joſephs bow abode in ſtrength by the arm of God, and his bough green and fruitful, fed by a well of living water:* ſo that it is not the grace *in us*;
Gratia gratiam poſtulat. but the grace *with us:* grace ſupervening, and additional which keeps
ἡ χαρις τȣ̃ θεȣ̃ σὺν ἐμοὶ, 1 Cor. 15. 10. us from falling. Even the good ground were it not for the influence of the Sun and Rain, would prove as the Stony and Thorny Ground.

3. *Poſit.* 3. There is no ſuch ſtate of conſiſtency in the effectually called, but there is a daily combate, and oft-times a great inequality in his Pulſe; ſometimes *Amaleck*, ſometimes Iſrael *prevails*, and this war laſts not, as
2 Sam. 3. 1. that between the houſe of *Saul* and *David*, for certain years: but as
1 King. 14. 30 that between *Reboboam and Jeroboam all their days.*

Paul ſometimes as in the *third heaven*, crys out, We are more than Conquerors, who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of God, *&c.* ſometimes as *under foot*, crys out, *Oh wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body of death.*

4. Even godly perſons may fall for once, very fouly, as *Peter*; yea, lye long, as *David:* it is hard to ſay *how low* they may *fall*, and *how long* they may *lye*, yet ſin not unto death, as the Sun is for many months abſent from ſome Climates, yet returns again; ſo that they may then
Micah 7. 1. ſay with the Church, *Rejoyce not againſt me, O mine enemy, when I fall I ſhall ariſe, when I ſit in darkneſs, the Lord ſhall be a light unto me.*

5. *Poſit.* 5. There may alſo poſſibly be a relapſe, or falling a-new into the ſame act of ſin through humane infirmity, as *Abraham* twice denying his Wife, the Diſciples twice contending for Supremacy. And as I will not ſay how oft thy brother treſpaſſing, and repenting, is to be forgiven, not to ſeven, but to *ſeventy times ſeven:* ſo I cannot ſay how oft through infirmity a ſinner treſpaſſing, and returning with repentance may be forgiven, Gods mercies and thoughts being ſo far above mans.

6. *Poſit.* 6. The Chriſtian may, as to his own ſenſe, be reduced to a very ſad and low ſtate. 1. He is poor in ſpirit, he mourns, he hungers, thirſts, pants, doubts, diſlikes all. 2. He judgeth of himſelf as (under preſent prevalency of corruption) *Carnal*, *ſold under ſin*, a forced ſlave to it, *Rom.* 7. 14. 3. As if nothing had been done yet, and all was to do, he begs, O God, *create a new heart in me*, Pſal. 51. 4. He may be apt to conclude againſt himſelf, I never did yet truly believe or repent; and
Joh. 20. 25. which is worſe, with *Thomas*, *I never ſhall believe.* 5. In this caſe he
Act. 12. 6, 7. lies bound, as *Peter*, and cannot help himſelf till the Angel comes and ſtrikes

strikes off the bands, and opens the *iron gate.* 6. And, *as to comfort*, he may be at an utter loss, *walk in darkness*, Isa. 50. 10. judge *himself cut off*, Ezek. 37. 11. *his hope perished*, Lam. 3. 18. God hiding his face, Satan shewing his teeth, casting forth a flood, and shooting in a peal of *fiery darts*, *Curse God and die.* Thou art mine as sure as death, as sure of damnation, as I my self. Then how doth a poor soul mourn! I am forsaken and quite cast out of sight, I am as a bottle in the smoak (of hell) like a broken vessel, or fire-brand reserved for hell: as possible for this *Venice-glass*, said that distressed Gentlewoman Mrs. *Honeywood*, not to be broken when it falls on the ground, as for me to escape the damnation of hell. God can do much, saith he, but doth *he shew wonders among the dead*, Psal. 88. 10. Then *pray* he would, but *cannot*, *hope* he would, but *cannot*, *believe* he would, but *dare not*, *fear* he would not, but *must*, *resolve* he would to cast himself upon God, but he sees his *resolution* set another way, and he cannot he thinks change it, therefore doth he not go about it. To God he saith, *I am cast out of thy sight*, Psal. 31. 22. To Satan, *Vicisti Satana*, *Hast thou found, me, O mine enemy?* to despair I yield, but call not for quarter, nor beg I mercy; To affliction he saith, I am in the belly of hell, the weeds and chains of hell wrap me about; To Ministrs and other friends he saith, *Stand away, go not about to comfort me*, Isa. 22. 4. To promises and expetience he saith in his haste, All are Lyars.

Jon. 2. 2.

Gratia nec totaliter intermittitur, nec finaliter amittitur. Actus omittitur, habitus non amittitur; actio pervertitur, fides non subvertitur; concutitur, non excutitur, desinit fructus, latet succus; jus ad regnum amittunt demeritorie, non effective, Prid. Effectus justificationis suspenditur, at status justificati non dissolvitur. Suff. Brit.

Yet may the tide turn, and the Sun of Righteousness arise after a long winter, and continual night as in those remote Climates, who sit in the region and shadow of death, and come *with healing under his wings*; and he may cry out, Rejoyce with me, I have found him whom my soul loveth; the lost sheep is found by the good shepherd, the lost Saviour is found, *Luke* 2. the lost Starr seen again, *Mat.* 2. And the utterly despairing hopes of salvation are disappointed by a safe, though hazardous coming to land, *Acts* 27. 20, and 44.

For Gods Election stands firm, and his love is unchangable, and his gifts without repentance; and the undertaking of Christ is to keep his to the end, that none shall pluck them out of his hand; and whom he gives himself for, he presents them spotless and blamless before his Father.

Therefore are the Godly as firm and safe from utter falling away, as Mount *Sion* from being removed, or an house on a rock from being subverted.

Here follows an Use of Terrour, and speaks to four Sorts.

1. This

2 *Use of Terrour.*

Hic videmus quanta sit Apostasiæ atrocitas nihil ad eam homicidia, adulteria, furta, &c. Par. in Io.

1. This Text is thunder and lightning against Apostates. Awake you drowsie Professors. There is no sin like Apostacy: Adulteries, Man-slaughter, Theft, Idolatries, &c, nothing to this; No *impossible* written over them, they have been renewed to repentance, 1 *Cor.* 6. 10, 11. *Mary Magdalens* seven unclean spirits; and *Manasses* ten or more, not so bad as the unclean spirit going out, and a return with an *Ogdoas malorum spirituum*, as *Irenæus* calls it, with seven other spirits more besides it self. Thou art in the high-way to perdition, to the sin against the Holy Ghost. Sins and judgments meet together in this sin. The Cataracts of upper and neather springs, all the *windows of heaven and fountains of the great deep*, (as in that great Deluge, *Gen.* 11.) are broken up to drown thee in perdition. Thy sins making way for more judgments, and this judgment making way for more sins: till between these two seas thy soul (as that vessel, *Act.* 27. 41.) is eternally shipwrackt.

If thou art not altogether past feeling, crucifying the Son of God afresh, and treading his Blood and Covenant under foot. I sound this Trumpet to warn thee, or to deliver my own soul, *Remember whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do thy first works*, Rev. 2. 5. *Be watchful and strengthen what is ready to die*, Rev. 3. 2. *Haste, escape for thy life, look not be-*
2 Sam. 20. 38. *hind thee*, as was said to *Lot*, or as *Jonathan* in another case, *Away, make speed, haste, stay not.*

2. This speaks terrour to Professors fallen, or lying in scandalous sins, you cannot sin at so easie a rate as others, you know your *Masters will and*
Luk. 12. 48. *do it not, therefore shall be beaten with more stripes.* You are as a *City* set on an hill, your fault cannot be hid, no more than an Eclipse of the Sun: when the Moon or other Stars totally Eclipse, no notice is taken of
2 Sam. 12. 14. them. You make *the enemies of Religion blaspheme*, or deride godliness,
1 Sam. 2. 24. you *make the Lords people to transgress*, your sins are more infectious then others, your repentance had need be extraordinary, not only for pardon which you haply may obtain, but for the scandal which others may take which you cannot possibly prevent.

3. Terrour to such as after conviction and engagements under affliction and distress, after some prayers, vows, and a begun, or resolved reformation, return to former courses, as they after what they promised in their distress, *Jer.* 34. 15, 16. returned when delivered, and started aside like a broken bow. The *new brooms* of affliction swept the house clean for the present, but afterwards the unclean spirit returns, and this washed Sow is wallowing in the mire again.

4. Such as lapse and relapse into the same sin again, as *Pharaoh*, *Jeroboam*,

roboam, and those Antichristian brood, *Rev.* 9. 20, 21. which repented not; notwithstanding all judgments, convictions, confessions, promises, go from evil to worse; from affliction to sin, from sin to duty, and from duty to sin; repent and sin, sin and repent; and from repenting of sin in distress, go to repent of their repentance when delivered. *Pharaoh unsaith* all he had said, and saith his repentance *backward*; as the door turneth and returneth on the hindges, is sometimes shut, by and by open again; so these in no constant posture, their goodness like a morning dew, a little devotion in a morning, for all companies till night comes, then a little evening dew again; *Amphibia* that live in both Elements, *Modo Ecclesiæ, modo theatra replentes*, now you see them at a Sermon, anon at a Play-house, as *Solomons* Harlot sacrificing in the morning, prostituting her self to all filthiness at night, or as *Solomons* drunken beast, that hath had knocks and blows, yet being besotted with his drink, or company, saith, *They have stricken me and beaten me, but I felt it not, when I awake I shall seek it again*; or as *Esays* debauched watchmen, who having drunk sufficiently one day, say they will do as much to morrow, and more too, and so had their drinking matches and rantings from day to day.

Jer. 9. 3.

Aug.

Prov. 7. 14, 15
Prov. 23. 25.
Isa. 56. 12.

The third Use is of Discrimination, to discover who is clean and who unclean in respect of falls and relapses; and to put a difference between the *holy and prophane*, which is the proper work of a faithful Prophet: to some we are to *open* the door of hope, to some to *shut* it: every sin is not a *sin to death*; every disease not the *Plague*; every Ulcer not a *Leprosie*.

3 *Use.*

Ezek 22. 26.
1 Joh. 5. 17.

1. There are some who have fallen into foul sins, and they think their case desperate, because of the greatness of their sins; but their sin is not the sin against the *Holy Ghost*, because not committed after *light, taste, partaking of the Holy Ghost*, &c. but in the days of their ignorance, as *Paul* once: some fall foully after conversion, as *Peter*, but not deliberately, maliciously, and both these may be the *spots* of children, they see the *plague in their heart*, feel the smart, these have foul *scabs*, but they go to *Jordan* and wash, go to the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, and *then though their sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though red like crimson, they shall be as white as wooll.*

1 King. 8. 38.

Isa 1. 18.

2. There be some Relapses through humane infirmity, which are truly bewailed, this is not the sin against the Holy Ghost neither. Come into the Camp, I pronounce such clean: For 1. there is no *raw flesh* of pride and presumption in them. 2. All is *turned white*, by true repentance:

Lev. 13. 4, 5, 6, 14. pentance: it is *a ſcab*, and but *a ſcab*. 3. It is but *ſkin-deep*, the heart was not tainted. 4. It ſtandeth at *a ſtay*. Theſe four ſigns ſhew it to be no Plague of Leproſie: ſuch are not to be ſhut up, or put out of the Camp. And God as he pardoneth iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſin, ſo he promiſeth to heal and pardon *their back-ſlidings*, Hoſea 14. 4. Jer. 3. 22.

Deut. 24. 19, 20. 3. But there are others that make a trade of ſin, *drink up iniquity like water*, that add *Drunkenneſs to thirſt*, and fall and riſe, and riſe and fall: they lapſe and relapſe, and ſlide away as water, ſhall I ſay ſuch *ſhall have peace?* No, what peace to ſuch ſo long as their ſins remain, *the wrath of the Lord, and his jealouſie ſhall ſmoak againſt that man, and he ſhall blot out his name from under heaven.*

Lev. 13. 10, 11, 14, 15. Pſal. 68. 21. Call not this *a ſcab*, this is the Plague of Leproſie, this is more than *ſkin-deep*, this doth not *ſtand at a ſtay*, here is proud *raw fleſh*, this is an *old ſore*, thou muſt out of the Camp, thou art unclean. *God will wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy ſcalp of him that goeth on ſtill in his treſpaſſes.*

I ſhall to conclude give a few ſhort Directions, to prevent Falls and Relapſes, but cannot now enlarge upon them.

Mat. 26. 41. 1. *Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation.* This is the old and great receit, and daily experimented with every ordinary Saint, *probatum eſt*, watch in prayer, watch after, watch when alone, watch when in company, eſpecially againſt ill Company and all occaſions of ſin.

2. Keep conſcience tender, and ſhun the firſt motions, and occaſions of ſin; if thou find thy ſelf given to appetite, put a knife to thy throat, is the wiſe mans counſel, if to wine, look not on the glaſs; if to wantonneſs, come not near her corner: the conſecrated *Nazarite* muſt not only forbear the wine, but the grape; and not only the juyce, but the huſk and kernel of it.

Numb. 6. 4. 3. Take heed of having ſlight thoughts of ſin, as to ſay, as long as it is no worſe, it is the firſt time, it is but now and then, a great chance, when I meet with ſuch company, and many have ſuch fooliſh pleas, and ſo play at the mouth of the Cockatrice Den till they are ſtung to death.

Deut. 29. 19. 4. Of having light thoughts of Gods mercy, *I ſhall have peace*, I ſhall have mercy when I do but ask, *At what time ſoever*, will ſave me: we cannot out-ſin the mercy of God, when ſin abounds, grace ſuper-abounds, &c. The Lord ſaith, he will not *ſpare ſuch, nor be merciful to them.*

5. Take

5. Take heed of reasoning from Gods temporal forbearance, to eternal forgiveness. *Because sentence is not speedily executed against an evil doer, his heart is fully set in him to do evil: but though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, &c. yet it shall not be well with the wicked at last.* Eccles. 8. 11, 12.

6. Take heed of presuming of thy own strength, I can, and I mean to repent, I can when I will, and I will when time serves: I trust I am not so bad, that God hath not given me over; many have gone further than I, why may I not repent at last hour? *Qui promittit pœnitenti veniam, non promittit peccanti pœnitentiam.*

7. Take heed of a mock-repentance, saying, I cry God-mercy, God forgive me, I sin daily and repent daily, when I have sworn or been drunk, I am heartily sorry: Is not this repentance? I answer no, Repentance is quite another thing: the burnt child, we say, *dreads the fire:* Thou hast smarted for suretiship, and hast repented of it: thy friend comes again and desires thee to be bound with him once again, thou replyest, I have paid dear for suretiship already, I have repented of my folly, I have resolved to come into bonds again no more, no not for the best friend I have, thou art importuned by many arguments, but, peremptorily refusest: urge me no more, I have vowed and resolved against, and have made an oath, I would never be taken in that fault again. Now I believe thee, that thou hast truly repented of suretiship, why dost thou not thus, when thou art enticed unto sin again? why dost thou not say? I have smarted, confessed, bewailed, been heartily sorry for my former folly: now speak no more of it, *I have sworn and will perform it, to keep Gods Commandments.* Away from me ye wicked, I must keep the Commandments of my God. This would be somewhat like true repentance. But take heed of a mock-repentance, lest as true repentance meets with a true pardon, thy mock-repentance should be answered with a mock-pardon, as *Tertullian* excellently saith, there be some that say (saith he) their heart is good, they fear God, grieve for sin, though yet they fall into sin, they can, *salva fide & metu, peccare*, &c. *sic & ipsi salva venia in gehennam detrudentur, dum salvo metu peccant.* They can live in sin, nevertheless notwithstanding their faith and repentance, and God can damn them nevertheless notwithstanding his mercies and promises and pardoning grace. True repentance among other companions is alway attended with these three, *what carefulness, what indignation, what fear hath it* wrought in you? Psal. 119. 106. Psal. 119. 115. *De Pœnitent.*

8. Consider sin reiterated riseth high, adds another figure to increase thy account, *Is the sin of Peor too little for you* (old sins in ignorance) *but that you must this day again turn away anew.* The Lord keeps

an account how often and how often, thou haſt committed ſuch and
Joſh. 22. 27, 28. ſuch a ſin, at length ſaith, for *three tranſgreſſions, and for four I will not turn away their puniſhment:* When Iſrael had ſeen Gods works forty
Am. 1. and 2. chap. years, and tempted him ten times, he ſware they ſhould not enter in-
Numb. 14. 22. to his reſt. In the Law if an Oxe did gore a man, and the Maſter knew
Ex. 21. 28, 29 not of it, the Oxe ſhould die, not the Owner: but if the Oxe was *wont to puſh with his horn*, and the Maſter was told of it, Oxe and Maſter were both to die.

Laſtly, though I will not ſay to thee, who art a frequent *Relapſarian*, it is *impoſſible*, as to the malicious relapſer; yet I ſay, Remember that every time the bone is broken the more danger; and though thou mayſt poſſibly after a ſecond breaking have it well ſet, yet thou mayſt at times
Job 13. 26. againſt weather, ſpecially when in years, feel it to thy dying day, thy ſins *will lye down* with thee in thy grave; and in ſickneſs and trouble thou wilt poſſeſs the ſins of thy youth. I conclude all, as St. *Jude* concludes his Epiſtle, *Now to him that is able to keep you from (all) falling (and relapſes) and to preſent you faultleſs before his preſence with exceeding joy; to the only wiſe God our Saviour, be glory and majeſty, dominion and power, now and for ever, Amen.*

How

How may we be ſo Spiritual, as to check Sin in the firſt riſings of it.

Gal. 5. 16.

Walk in the Spirit, and ye ſhall not fulfill the luſts of the fleſh.

THe Caſe of Conſcience to be diſcuſſed this Morning from theſe words, is——How a Chriſtian may be able to check ſin in the firſt riſings of it?

And without controverſie great is this Myſtery of godlineſs, and if any other, of ineſtimable uſe and moment in the practiſe of Chriſtianity. As the title which *Solomon* inſcribes on the Frontiſ-piece of that divine Poem of his, *the Canticles*, is, שיר השירים, the Song of Songs. And as *Ariſtotle* calls the Hand, the *Inſtrument of Inſtruments*, and the Mind, the *Form of Forms*: ſo may we with as juſt a reaſon ſtyle this holy skil, of arreſting, and intercepting ſin in its earlieſt motions & overtures, the *Art of Arts*. Could the Chymiſts ever compaſs their *grand Elixir*, it were but a poor and cheap trifle, in compariſon of this *grand Secret* of the School of Chriſt. So that the Caſe of Conſcience before us, (like *Diana of the Epheſians*) is great and illuſtrious amidſt its fellows.

My Text preſents us with it reſolved in this excellent Rule of ſanctification, *Walk in the Spirit*, &c.

Wherein we have, 1. The principle and root of *ſin* and *evil*, the *fleſh* with

with its *lusts*. 2. The opposite principle and root of life and righteousness, *the divine Spirit*. 3. The terms and bounds of a Christians conquest, how far he may hope for victory----*Ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh*. 4. The method and way of conquering----*Walk in the Spirit*. Of each a word.

1. The principle and root of sin and evil, the flesh with its lusts. The Apostle meaneth (pardon the phrase) a spiritual flesh, not that of the body, but the mind. The immortal souls of men, through their Apostasie from God, the blessed source, and original of all goodness, are become carnal, *Rom.* 4.7. There is a principle of *evil* radicated in the very nature, interwoven in the very frame, and births, and constitution of all men; a byas that turns us off in large and wide aberrations from the paths of life and happiness, but with notorious partiality seduceth us into the ways of sin and death. This the Scripture calls the [a] *old man*, the [b] *law of sin in our members*, and the *body of death*, &c.

[a] Eph. 4. 22.
[b] Rom. 7. 23, 24.

The wiser Heathen, felt by the very dictate of Reason, that humane nature was not either as it should be, or as they could have wisht it, what meaneth else that ἀπτερία, πτεροῤῥύησις, that hanging, and flagging of the souls wings, that drooping of her noblest faculties, and that fatal unweildiness, and untractableness of the will to vertue, which the *Platonists* so much complain of? and what meaneth that ἀνάγκη πολλὰ τῷ θείῳ συμμαχεῖσα, καὶ ἰδιωτεύουσα, that reluctancy to the *divine life*, and that impetuous hurry, and propension wherewith they felt themselves driven headlong towards folly, and sensuality?

Plut. in Φυγογενία.

This *flesh* in man, this corrupt and depraved nature, is perpetually fly-blown with evil lustings. This body of death, like a rotten carcase, is constantly breeding vermine, as a filthy quagmire, a noisome *Mephitis* or *Camarina*, sends out stench and unsavourineſs. This Region of the *lesser World* (like *Africa* in the greater) swarms with Monsters, it is the valley of the shadow of death, *a habitation for Dragons, and a Court for Owls, where dwels the Cormorant and the Bittern, the Raven, the Scrich-owl, and the Satyr*, If I may allude to that of the Prophet, *Isa.* 34. 11, 12, 13, 14. The Apostle sets down elegantly the whole pedigree and lineage of evil, *Jam.* 1. 15. *Then when lust hath conceived, it brings forth sin, and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death.* Lust is the root of bitterness, fruitful in all the unfruitful works of darkness, and these, like the Apples of *Sodom*, and Clusters of *Gomorrah*, if you gather them, crumble into dust and ashes of *death*, they are fruits nigh unto a curse, and whose end is to be burnt. That is the first: The *old Adam*, the flesh with its lusts.

Heb. 6. 8.

2. We

2. We have here the *second Adam*, who is a quickning *Spirit*, 1 Cor. 15.45. There is in good and holy souls an immortal seed, a principle of life and righteousness, an antidote to the former poyson, *for the law of the Spirit of life which is in Jesus Christ hath made us free from the law of sin and death*, Rom. 8. 2. *Philo* the Jew, or whoever was the Author of that noble Tract in the *Apocrypha*, called the Wisdom of *Solomon*, stiles it,---*The unspotted Mirrour of the power of God, and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty*. Every one that is in Christ is (*a*) a new creature, (*b*) born again, (*c*) and made partaker of the divine nature, for it is the royalty of that King of Saints---- (*d*) *Behold I make all things new*. The Divine Spirit, that great and heavenly *Archeus* is busie in holy souls, that mighty principle of life, is counter-working the flesh, and its lusts. So that now the *weapons* of a Christians *warfare are mighty through God, for the pulling down of strong holds, and the captivating every imagination, yea, bringing every thought into the obedience of Christ*, 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5, 17.

Wisd. 7. 6.

a 2 Cor. 5. 17.
b Joh. 3. 3, 4, 5, 6.
c 2 Pet. 1. 4.
d Rev. 21. 5.

3. Here are the terms and bounds of the Spirits conquests in this present life, at which a Christians hopes and endeavours must take aim, not the extirpating, but subduing, not the not having, but the not *fulfilling* the lusts of the flesh; the flesh will be lusting, that accursed womb will be conceiving in the regenerate themselves. But here is the Christians priviledge, that while he walks in the Spirit, those conceptions shall prove abortive.

4. The words entirely, and in sum, present us with the method and way of conquering, with the art of circumventing sin in the first avenues, and approaches of it. *Walk in the Spirit*, &c. this is the ἐν μέγα, the great and *Achillean* Stratagem against the powers of darkness, the true and only course we are to take, if we would strangle the brats of *night* and *hell* in their very birth, and crush the *Cockatrices* egg, whilst it is hatching, and before it excludes the *Serpent*.

So that *in fine* the Observation which resulteth, is this:

The best expedient in the world not to fulfill the lusts of the flesh, is to walk in the Spirit, which what it imports, I come now to shew. Doctrine.

1. *Walk in the Spirit*, *i.e.* in obedience to Gods Commandments which are the *Oracles of the Spirit*; that this is excellently preventive of fulfilling the motions to sin, appeareth *Psal.* 119. 1, 2, 3. Blessed are the *undefiled* in the way, who *walk in the Law of the Lord*: Blessed are they that *keep his Testimonies*, they also *do no iniquity*; again a little lower, ver. 9. *Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word*. *Aristotle* that great Dictator

tor in Philosophy, despaired of atchieving so great an enterprize, as the rendering a *young man* capable of his ἠθικὰ ἀκροάματα, his grave and severe Lectures of Morality; for that age is leight and fooliſh, yet head-strong and untractable. Now, take a *young man* all in the heat and boyling of his blood, in the highest fermentation of his youthful lusts, and at all these disadvantages, let him enter that great School of the holy Spirit, the divine Scripture, and permit himself to the conduct of those blessed Oracles, and he shall effectually be convinced, by his own experience, of the incredible vertue, the vast and mighty power of Gods word, in the success it hath upon him, and in his daily progr ssions, and advances in heavenly wisdom. Let me invite you then this day, in the Prophets words, *Isa.* 2. 5. *O house of Jacob come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord.* And what that is *David* tells us, Psal. 119. 105. *Thy words are a light to my feet, and a lamp to my paths*, and Hos. 6. 5. *His judgments are as a light that goeth forth.* Order thy steps by his word, and thou shalt not tread awry, let the Law of thy God be in thine heart, and sin which is the transgression of the Law, shall not come nigh thee: walk in this broad day-light of the Sun of Righteousness shining in the Scriptures, and thou shalt have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, This was the practise, and experience too of the man after Gods own heart, *I have hid thy word in my heart, that I might not sin against thee*, Psal. 119. 11. It is good writing after the Copy of so great a Master, Go thou and do likewise

Cereus in vitium flecti monitoribus asper Hor. ar. Poet.

2. *Walk in the spirit, i. e.* as becometh those in whom Gods Spirit dwels, as if the Apostle had said, the part which ye are now to act, O ye Christian Galatians, it is that of *new creatures:* see that ye keep the *Decorum.* Demean your selves like the *children of God, who are led of the Spirit of God*, Rom. 8. 14. Be true to your part, fill it up, adorn it, and then sure enough, ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh, for that were to act the part just contrary to what you sustain: as he that is to represent upon the stage some generous and heroick person, cannot do the least base and sordid thing, but he breaks his part, and digresseth into the garb, and posture of a vile and abject person: whilst he is true to his part, he cannot possibly do any thing that is absurd, and mis-beseeming.

μεταβάλλειν εἰς ἄλλο γένος.

Some of the *Nethinim* stood continually Porters at the door of the Temple, to keep out whatsoever was unclean, and hereunto the Apostl: palpably alludeth, 1 Cor. 3. 16, 17. *Know ye not that ye are the Temples of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you: now if any man*

man defile the Temple of God, him will God destroy; for the Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are. So then that which the Rule amounts to by this interpretation is, *Walk in the Spirit,* * i.e. *Walk as becomes the Temples of the Holy Ghost, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.*

* That a good mans soul is a Temple which God inhabits, the Philosophers acknowledg; and that the honour and worship rendred to him in a pure and holy mind, is incomparably more worthy and acceptable, than all the costliest sacrifices and offerings in Temples made with hands, how magnificent soever. Μόνῳ γαρ οἷς τιμᾶν ὁ θεὸς γέμενος ὁ ἱερεῖον, ἄυλον προσάγων καὶ ἄγαλμα θεῖον τεκταίνων τῷ ἑαυτῷ ψυχὴν καὶ ναὸν εἰς ὑποδοχὴν τῷ θεῷ ζωτὸς, τὸν ἑαυτῷ παρασκευάζων νοῦν, ψυχῆς δὲ καθαρᾶς τύπον οἰκειότερον ἐπὶ γῆς. Θεὸς ἐν ἔχει τις καὶ ὁ πύθιος συμφέρεται λέγων·· Εὐσέβειαν δὲ βροτοῖς γάνυμαι τόσον ὅσον ὄλυμπος. Hierocl. in Pythag. aur. carm. p. 28.

8. *Walk in the Spirit, i.e.* Fulfil the counsels and advices of the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. Every renewed soul is the Scean and Stage, wherein the two mightiest Contraries in the World, the Spirit and the Flesh, *i.e.* Light and Darkness, Life and Death, Heaven and Hell, Good and Evil, *Michael* and his Angels, and the Dragon with his, are perpetually combating hand to hand. And well it is for a Christian that the Holy Spirit is lusting in him against the flesh, ἀγαθὴ δ' ἔρις ἥδε βροτοῖσι, God takes thy part, Christian, the Spirit of the Lord of Hosts is with thee, if thou dost not sin and grieve him away. Follow but thy Leader, be prompt and ready to start at the Divine signal, when the Holy Ghost displays his Ensignes, then μετ' ἴχνια βαίνε θεοῖο, March presently forth under those mighty and victorious banners, and thou shalt become *Invincible.* * When a Christian goeth out thus to warfare, following the Almighty conduct of his God, he must needs proceed conquering, and to conquer. *My soul followeth hard after thee* (saith *David*) *thy right hand upholds me,* Psal. 63 8. The Original is דבקה אחריך נפשי, *My soul cleaves after thee:* As if he had said, Go, lead on, my God, behold I follow as near, as close as I can, *è vestigio,* I would not leave any distance, but pursue thy foot-steps, step by step, leaning upon thine everlasting arms, that are underneath me, and following thy manuduction. *Lot* had almost perisht in *Sodom,* for lingring when his God hastned him away, *Gen.* 19. 16. But *Sampson* (till then invincible) awoke too late from the bolome of his *Dalilah,* when the *Philistines* had shaved his seven locks: *And he thought to go out and shake off their cords wherewith they bound him, as at other times, but the Lord was departed from him, and they took him and put out both his eyes,* Judg. 16. 20, 21. A Christian is more then a man when he acts in concurrence with his God, *Psal.* 27. 1. *The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear, the Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?*

* ἀπλῶς μηδὲν ἄλλο θέλειν ἢ ἃ ὁ θεὸς θέλει, καὶ τὶς σε καλύσει, τίς ἀνοήσασι μᾶλλον ἢ τὸν Δία ὅτ' ἀν τοι. ὕπτον ἔχης ἠγεμόνα καὶ τοιοῦτῳ συνθέλης καὶ συνοδεύης, &c. Arrian in Epictet. l. 2. c. 17.

afraid? But if he resists the Holy Ghost, he doth not only grieve him, but will if he go on resisting, quench him, and then he is all alone, and becomes heir to the curse of *Reuben*, *Gen.* 49. 3, 4. he who was a while since, *the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power, is now weak as water, and cannot excell.*

The Proverb tells us πολὺς ἐν καιρῷ χρόνος, There is a great deal of Time in a little opportunity. It is good striking while the Iron is hot, and lanching out while wind and tyde serve. Open all the Sails to every breath, and gale of Gods good Spirit. Welcome every suggestion, reverence every dictate, cherish every illapse of this blessed *Monitor*, let every inspiration find thee, as the Seal doth the Wax, or the spark the tinder, and then (as the Spouse tells her beloved) or ever thou art aware thy Soul will make thee as the Chariot of * *Aminadab*. Step into the pool when the Angel stirs the water, *Joh.* 5. 4. Keep touch with the motions of the Spirit, and all is well.

* עמי נדיב. *i. e.* a free, and willing people.

But if these three Rules are too general, and remote, I shall now lay down some more particular, and exact directions for checking *the beginnings of sin*, and these are of two sorts (as Physicians have their *Prophylactiques*, and their *Therapentiques*,) Some for the prevention of the fit and paroxysm; others for the cure, and removal, when the symptoms of it are upon thee.

1. Before the Paroxysm cometh, prepare and antidote thy Soul against these lusts of the flesh, by observing these advices.

1 *Rule.* The first is that notable counsel of *Eliphaz* to *Job*, cap. 22. v. 21. *Acquaint thy self now with God, and be at peace.* Get thy heart fixed where thy treasure is; have *thy conversation in heaven*, and *thy fellowship with the father, and with his Son Jesus Christ:* Flee to thy God to hide thee. *He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust, his truth shall be thy shield and buckler*, Psal. 91. 1, 3, 4. Arise with thine arisen Lord, *and seek the things that are above:* Set thine affections there, *where Christ sits at the right hand of God.* If the Soul is not where it animates, but where it loves, awaken thine, and kindle it into holy passionate Extasies of love, that thou mayest live in heaven all day long, and (which is the priviledge of the *upright*, Psal. 140. 13.) dwell in the presence of that God whom thy soul delighteth in. The Tempter cannot reach thee there.

Be much in converse with God, and the Devil will have little converse with thee; or if he have, it will be to little purpose. How was the

the Majesty of King *Ahasuerus* incensed at that affront of *Haman*, when he threw himself upon Queen *Esthers* bed---*What will he force the Queen in our presence? Esth.* 7. 8. Keep but in the presence of thy Lord, thy King, thy Husband, and the *Ravisher* will not offer to force thee there, or if he do, it will be but in vain. How secure is that Soul that lives under the deep, and warm, and constant sense of Gods being its *all in all*? What a munition of rocks is this against all assaults and incursions of the Tempter? They are our tame and common Poultry, whose wings sweep the ground as they flye, and raise a dust: but the generous Eagle soon mounts above this smoaky lower Region of the Air, till she makes the clouds a pillow for her head. Put on, Christian, thy Eagles wings (which are the same with those Doves wings which *David* prayes for, *Psal.* 55. 6.) and *flee away, that thou mayst be at rest. They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength, they shalt mount up with wings as Eagles*, &c. *Isa.* 40. 31. When the soul is once but upon the wing heaven-ward, O how easily then doth it soar away above this Region of smoak and dust, above this *Atmosphære* of carnality, and fleshly lustings, into the pure and free *Æthereal* air, the blessed serenity and rest of *Gods life and kingdom, which is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, Rom.* 14. 17. It is cold iron that shews it rusty scales, they disappear when it is red hot. Get but thine heart on fire heaven-ward, be but ascending thither *Eliah*-like, in a flaming Chariot of holy longings and pantings after God, and the lustings of the flesh shall no more appear to deform thy beauty, then the rust of Iron appears, when the metal is *Candent*, *i. e.* all over of a light and glowing ardour. The Rule then is, Be sick of love to thy dear Master, and Lord, and thou shalt not be sick of sin. Stir up spiritual and holy lustings in thy soul after the *love* and *favour*, the *grace* and *image* of thy God, and thou *shalt not fulfil the lustings of the flesh.*

Study throughly *the unchangeable natures, the eternal laws and differences* of moral *good* and *evil*. To open this; there are some things of a *middle* and *indifferent* nature, neither good nor evil in themselves: But if God commands or forbids any of these, they are then good or evil indeed, but only *because* or *whilst* he doth so. The Ceremonial Law of the *Old Testament* stood in these things, and is now abolished by the same Divine authority which enacted it. And it is now the glory of Christian Religion, that (excepting the two Sacraments, and a very few other positive institutions for great and weighty causes reserved) the Evangelical Law of the *New Testament* consists of such precepts as Rule 2.

carry their own *Credential letters*, and are built upon moral grounds of everlaſting equity and righteouſneſs. Wherefore the *Romaniſts* deſerve very ill of Chriſtian Religion; nor are the *Lutheran* Churches to be excuſed, who of their own heads impoſe ſo many indifferent things now in the ſervice of God under the Goſpel, and that for no other reaſon, but becauſe they will; conſequently rendring that yoke a *hard one* which Chriſt left *eaſie*, and that burthen a *heavy* one, which he would have *light*.

But now moral Good and Evil are not only ſuch becauſe God commands the one, and forbids the other, but becauſe the things themſelves are ſo, eſſentially and unalterably. As *Mathematical* truths and Proportions are not ſuch becauſe God would have them ſo, but becauſe the nature of the things cannot be otherwiſe. Almighty power it ſelf (reverently be it ſpoken) cannot make two *parallel lines* or *ſurfaces* meet, though extended infinitely; or the three *Angles* of any *ſtraight-lined Triangle*, amount to any leſs or more than *two right Angles* in *Geometry*; or in *Arithmetick*, alter the proportions between *two* and *four*, to any other than that of *double* and half, or between three and nine, than that of a root and ſquare; or (to name no more) is it poſſible that a *Seventh* in *Muſique* ſhould ever become a *Concord*, or a *Uniſon*, fifth, or eighth, a *Diſcord*: for theſe things are in their very nature fixed, and unchangeable, they muſt be what they are, or not be at all. Thus there is an eternal reaſon, why that which is *good* ſhould be ſo, and commanded; and why that which is evil ſhould be ſo, and forbidden, which depends not ſo much on Gods *will*, as on his *nature*. For if God could will, that *good* ſhould be *evil*, and *evil good*, he could deny himſelf, and change his own unchangeable *Divinity*, which is impoſſible: And therefore I look upon that opinion of a modern * Dutch Author (though I would be ſo charitable, as to believe he knew not, and therefore meant not what he ſaid) as overthrowing all Religion: The thing is this, That God may if he pleaſe, out of the vaſt Soveraighty of his Will, command all that wickedneſs which he hath forbidden, and make it our duty; alſo forbid all that holineſs which he hath commanded, and make it become ſin to us.

* *Zigovius.*

For my part, I would chooſe rather to be an Athieſt, than to believe there is ſuch a *God* as *this* in the world. But I am ſure the *holy One of Iſrael* cannot do ſo, not through any defect, but through infinite plenitude, and redundance of all perfection. *Ex. Gr.* There is an eternal fitneſs and comlineſs that a reaſonable creature ſhould love, and honour, and obey its Creator, and contrarily an eternal horridneſs,

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and indecency, that an immortal soul should forget, contemn, and affront the Father of spirits. Now to affirm that God can dispence with the former, nay, make our fear of him, or delight in him to be a sin, and punish it with everlasting torments; and to affirm that God can wink at, or allow the latter, much less command Atheism, Blasphemy, Pride, Unthankfulness, &c. or make Hypocrisie, Covetousness, Revenge, Sensuality, to become duties and graces, and reward them with everlasting happiness, this were to utter the most hellish blasphemy, and the most impossible contradictions in the world. The heathen *Plato* (in those divine discourses of his, his *Eutyphro*, and *Theætetus*, and otherwhere) may well rebuke the madness of such Christians, as this bold and vain speculator. The sum of this Rule then is; Deeply possess and dye thy soul all over with the representation of that everlasting beauty and amiableness that is in holiness, and of that horror and uglyness, and deformity that eternally dwells on the forehead of all iniquity. Be under the awe and majesty of such clear convictions all day long, and *thou shalt not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.* For the mind of man is wont to conceive, before its own apprehensions and Idea's of good and evil, as *Jacobs* sheep did before the Rods in the Gutter. If thy notions of good and evil be right and clear, thy lustings and desires will be from evil towards good, all the conceptions of thy soul and their births will be fair and unspotted. But if thy apprehensions be speckled, confused, and ring-straked (like his Rods) the conceptions of the mind, thy lustings, will be so too, so great a truth is that πᾶς μοχθηρὸς ἀγνοῶν, that dark ignorance and folly lies at the bottom, as the root and foundation all wickedness, * every immoral man is a fool, even when he commits a known sin, yet then he may be said not to know what he doth, *Luk.* 23.34 All the Reason in the world takes the part of holiness, and sin hath not one jot of true Reason to plead, or alledg in its own behalf.

* Παραδειγμάτων ἐν τῷ ὄντι ἐστῶτων, πρὸς θεὸν, εὐδαιμονεστάτου· τοῦ δὲ ἀθέου ἀθλιώτατος.

καὶ ἡλιθιότητος ἰσχάτης καὶ ἀλαζονείας λανθάνουσι. τοῖς μὲν ὁμοιώμενοι διάτας ἃ δίκης πρὸς ἄλλους, τοῖς δὲ ἀνομοιώμενοι ἐκ ὁρῶντες ὅτι ὕτως ἔχει, ζῶντες δὲ τὸν εἰκότα βίον ὃ ὁμοιοῦνται δίκην τίνουσι, &c. Plato in Theateto.

Understand thy self, be no stranger to thy own breast, know the frame, and temper, and constitution of thy mind. *The wise mans eyes are in his head, but the fool walketh in darkness, Eccles.* 2 14. It is a true and sober maxim of the Platonist, ἐφ' ὅσον σαυτὸν ἀγνοεῖς, νόμιζε μαίνεσθαι, as far as a man is ignorant of himself, so far forth he is to reckon himself guilty of madness and distraction. The Satyrist complains of

Rule 3.

Demophil. in γνωθι.

Juvenal. this——*Ut nemo in sese tentat descendere, nemo.* Dare to unlock thy bosom, to ransack every corner of thy heart, let thy Spirit accomplish a diligent search. Feel the pulse of thy soul, visit it often, ask it how it doth. Surveigh thy self, and blush to leave any *terra incognita*, any region of thy mind undiscovered. God hath charged and entrusted every man with his own soul, and what folly is it ἀλλοτριεπισκοπεῖν to be busie in what doth not concern thee, and neglect what chiefly doth so, the affairs of thy own mind? Is any thing nearer thee, or of such consequence to thee as thy self? O let thy charity then begin at home. Thou owest this duty to thy self, to take an exact account daily of the posture, and order of thy inward man. With how great confusion doth the Spouse acknowledg this neglect, *Cant.* 1. 6. *They made me the keeper of the vineyards, but my own vineyard have I not kept.* If ever thou wouldst be dextrous in suppressing the first risings of sin, enquire, what advantages the tempter hath against thee? where that *nescio quid teneræ & molle*, lieth in thy soul (as *Cicero* calls it) against which temptation plants its chiefest battery, and artillery? what thine own iniquity is, *Psal.* 18. 23. which is that εὐπερίστατος ἁμαρτία, the sin that doth so easily beset thee, *Heb.* 12. 1. See what grace is principally wanting in thee, which is weakest? in what instances thy greatest *failleur* betrayes it self, in which of thy passions and affections thou art most *peccable*, and what lustings of the flesh they are, which give thee the frequentest *Alarms*, and threaten the greatest dangers? be making these researches and explorations daily, compare thy heart with the Law of the *eternal God*, and with the dictates and maxims of thine own conscience. See, where thy greatest discrepancy, and non-conformity to these from time to time ariseth, and this (like *Pathology* or understanding the disease, and the constitution of the patient) will hugely minister and conduce to the exact method of Physick, either for prevention, or for cure.

Rule 4. Get and keep a tender Conscience. Be sensible of the least sin. As the apple of the eye (the fittest Emblem, in the world, of a tender conscience) is not only offended, with a blow or wound, but if so much as a little dust or smoak get in, it weeps them out. Some mens consciences are like the stomack of the Ostrich that digesteth iron, they can swallow and concoct the most notorious sins, swearing, drunkenness, *&c.* without regret, *their consciences are seared as with an hot iron*, as the Apostle phraseth it, 1 *Tim.* 4. 2. they have so inured their souls to the grossest wickedness, as the *Psylli*, a people of *Africa*, whom *Plutarch* mentions, had their bodies to the eating poyson, that it becomes

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as it were natural. But a good conscience hath a delicate sense, it is the most tender thing in the whole world, it feels the least touch of known sin, and grieves at the grieving of Gods good Spirit, not only for *quenching*, or *resisting*, or *rebelling against the Holy Ghost*, but even for *grieving* the holy Spirit of promise, whereby it is sealed to the day of redemption, *Eph.* 4.30. The most tender hearted Christian, he is the stoutest and most valiant Christian. *Happy is the man that feareth always, but he that hardneth his heart shall fall into mischief*, Prov. 28.14. It is the truest magnanimity, and heroick courage in our spiritual warfare to tremble at the least iniquity. A Christian is never fitter to *endure hardness as a faithful souldier of Jesus Christ*; than when his conscience is most tender. To be such a coward as not to dare to break any one of Gods Commandments, is to be the valiantest person in the world, for such a one will chuse the greatest evil of suffering, before the least of sinning; and however the *jeering Ishmaels* of the world be ready to reproach, and laugh one to scorn, for this niceness, and precise scrupulosity (as they term it) yet the *choice* (if God be but wiser than vain man) is a very wise one. 2 Tim. 2. 3.

Keep an exact guard upon thy heart, *Prov.* 4. 23. let the eyes of thy soul be open and awake, upon all the stirrings of thy thoughts and affections. Bid them stand at their first appearance. As soon as ever thou descriest any of them in motion, summon them before thy souls tribunal: let them not pass till thou knowest perfectly, whence they come, whither they go. Ask their errand: *Rule* 5.

State viri; quæ causa vie? quive estis in armis? Virg.

Is it grief, or is it joy, or hope, or fear, or love, *&c.* that is now upon the march? Demand the *Word* of it, ask whether it hath a *Pass* from God, and Conscience; Catechise it, examine it, search it; speak to it in the Centinel's and Watchman's phrase, Δεῖξον τὰ συνθήματα. shew me your Ticket. Tell me my *desire*, my *love*, my *fear*, my *anger* by whose authority art thou now up, and in motion? if they are able to produce a good warrant, from Gods Commandments, or from the dictate of reason, and conscience, let them go on in Gods name; they are about their business. But if they cannot, arrest them as idle vagrants, nay as enemies to thy souls peace, and charge them upon their allegiance to their superiours, that they stir no further.

Be daily training and exercising all thy graces. Have them always in battel-array, be in a military posture, both defensive and offensive. Stand constantly to thine arms for thou hast to do with two enemies that *Rule* 6.

that will never give thee any *truce*, or respite, the יצר רע and the מלאך השוחת (as the *Jews* call them) the flesh within thee, *Jer.* 17. 9. and the *Tempter*, that destroying Angel of the bottomless pit, without thee, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. the Christian warfare is πόλεμος ἄσπονδος, a war never to be altered, it admits of no peace, no cessation. The Souldier of Christ must never lay down his arms, but expect to be upon continual duty, and travel, till the great Lord of Hosts, under whose banner he now fighteth, is pleased to remove his Quarters from that Army Militant here on Earth, to that blessed and Triumphant in the Heavens.

Rule 7. Be well skilled in the *Elenchs* of *Temptation*. I mean, in unmasking the Sophistry and Mystery of iniquity, in defeating the *Wiles*, and Stratagems of the Tempter, and in detecting, and frustrating the cheats and fineneſles of the flesh with its deceitful lusts, *Ephes.* 4. 22. 2 *Cor.* 2. 11. No small part of spiritual wisdom lies in the blessed art of discovering and refuting sins fallacies and impostures. If ever thou wouldst prove famous, and victorious, and worthy honour and reverence in thy spiritual warfare, be well seen in the skill of fencing, know all thy wards for every attaque. Provide thy self with answers and retorts beforehand, against the subtil insinuations, and delusions of thine enemy, *Ex. gr.* If Satan tells thee (as he often will) that the sin is pleasant, * ask whether the gripings of conscience be so too; whether it be such a pleasant thing to be in hell, to be under the wrath of an Almighty Judge. If he tells thee, no body sees, thou mayst commit it safely; ask whether he can put out Gods all-seeing eye, whether he can find a place empty of the divine presence for thee to sin in, or whether he can blot out the *Items* out of the Book of Gods Remembrance. If he tells thee it is a little one, ask whether the Majesty of the great *Jehovah*, be a little one, whether there be a little hell, or no. If he talks of profits and earthly advantages that will acrew, ask what account it will turn to at the last day, and what profit there is, if one should gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what one should give in exchange for his soul. When sin, like *Jael*, invites thee into her Tent, with the *lure* and *decoy* of a Lordly treatment, think of the nail and hammer which fastned *Sisera* dead to the ground. Be not caught with chaff, lay by thee such *memoires*, such answers and *reparties* as these, wherewith thou mayst reply upon the Tempter: that the God of truth hath other manner of *pleasures*, *profits*, *honours* to court thy love, and reward thy service with, than the father of lies, *viz.* true and real, solid and eternal ones; what are the pleasures, that are in

* Τὶς ϛι πολυπλανέων ἐπέων ἐδίδαξε κεφαλὴ θνητῶν, Musæ.

Mat. 16. 26.

Judg. 4. 18, 21 & 5. 25, 26.

in sin for a season, to be compared with the rivers of Gods pleasure, that are for evermore at his right hand? And what is a little wealth, that thieves can steal, a despicable heap of riches, which like a flock of birds a lighting a little while in thy yard, will take wing presently and fly away, to be named, with the unsearchable riches of Christ, or that inheritance of the Saints in light? Or what is the painted bubble, the fading, though beauteous Rainbow, of earthly honour and grandeur, to a weight of glory, to an incorruptible crown of righteousness, that fadeth not away; to a Kingdom, which it is the Fathers good pleasure to reserve in the highest heavens for every sheep, and every lamb of his little flock, and (to name these Considerations by cluster) remember, that the greatest wisdom is to do, not what in some poor few regards is, but what is absolutely lovely and desirable; that what is best of all, is best for thee to love, and mind, and prosecute; that a good conscience is a continual feast, that God alone is enough, and without him, nothing for thy happiness: that thy soul is worthier thy care, than thy carcase, and the life to come, than this; that eternity is more valuable than time; that not the opinions of men lulled asleep in voluptuousness and sensuality, but Gods estimate, but the sentiments of the holiest, best, and wisest men; or (if you needs will) of the worst and vilest, when conscience is awakened, when they come to lye a dying, and when they shall stand before God at the last day, are to be preferred as the wisest. That everlasting happiness cannot be bought too dear, but repentance and shame may easily. That the hardest *doings* or *sufferings* for Christ, are infinitely easier than everlasting misery. That heaven, and glory, will more than recompence all thy self-denials, and mortifications, all thy watchings, fastings, &c, and in the mean time, the very hope of it, besides the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, and his love and grace, and the comforts of his Spirit, will certainly sweeten all the tediousness of thy way to heaven, with inexpressible redundance of satisfaction, yea, sometimes with joy unutterable and full of glory. In sum, that God is a good Master, and his service perfect freedom, for besides the glorious recompence to come; thy work, Christian, is even now its own reward. If thou believest strongly such Aphorisms as these (and he is madder than any in *Bedlam* that doth not believe them) it will be no hard matter, by Gods blessing and assistance, in their strength *to put to flight the armies of the aliens*, at least to shield thy self against the volleys of fiery darts, which at any time the Tempter shall pour upon thee.

— μήτε τι ἔργον ἄσκεε, μηδ' ἐπιταίην ὃ τι τοι μὴ βελτίον ἔσῃ. Pythag. carm.

Withdraw thy self, if possible, from the occasions of sin. It is good *Rule 8.* standing

standing out of harms way: do not gaze upon temptations, but pray
Psal. 73. 2. with *David*, *Lord turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity*, Psalm 119. 37. If thou perceivest *thy feet are almost gone*, *thy steps had well nigh slipt*, it is surely high time for thee if thou canst to run away; nor will it be reckoned thy cowardize, but thy valour in the day of thine account, thus to retreat from the enemy. It is a very wise mans counsel concerning the haunts and converses of the profane, *Enter not into the path of the wicked*, *and go not in the way of evil men*, *avoid it*, *pass not by it*, *turn from it*, *and pass away*, Prov. 4. 14, 15. again concerning the strange woman, *Remove thy way far from her*, *and come not nigh the door of her house*, chap. 5. 8. And again concerning occasions of intemperance, *be not among wine-bibbers*, amongst riotous eaters of flesh, chap. 23. 20, and ver. 31. *Look not on the wine when it is red*, *when it giveth its colour in the cup*, *when it moveth it self aright*, i.e. when it sparkles and vapours in the glass, when it laughs in thy face, and invites thy lip, then shut thy eyes, lest sin steal in upon thee. Do not imitate the silly Lark which by the pleasing contemplation of the little piece of glass, that glitters in the Sun, while the Fowler twirles it about, is enticed nearer and nearer, forgetting or oversecing the net, which ere long overwhelms it. Vouchsafe not to admit the Tempter to a *Parle*, the Poets fable *Ulysses* to have stopt his ears at the enchaunting voices of the *Syrens*. Be thou as the deaf Adder to that great *Charmer*: the best entertainment thou canst give him, is——*Get thee behind me Satan.*

Rule 9. Bind thy self beforehand with the severest of thy resolutions, not to trust thy own judgment, when the Temptation begins to get within thee: a man in passion is not himself, *Periit judicium cum res transiit in affectus.* One distempered with the *morbus arcuatus*, the *Jaundise*, black or yellow, is apt to impute the colour his eye is vitiated with, to every object; who would trust such a judg of colours? or the palate of one in a Feaver, to distinguish of Tastes? It is a good rule under the disorder of temptation, Μήποτε ἐπιτεῖν, never credit thy own apprehensions at such a time. If thou takest thy self yielding in the least, start back with abhorrence, and chide thy rashness, appealing from thy present distracted, to thy ancient and wiser *self*; from thy *self* asleep and disordered, to thy *self* awake and sober, at other times. *Jonah's* judgement was weak and childish (though a Prophet) when he was under that temptation of impatient anger, *Jon.* 4. 9. *I do well to be angry*, a saucy and bold answer to his God! he should not have trusted his present sentiments, for he was not himself. As one that bespeaks

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an awakening, will over night desire his friend not to give ear to him, though (saith he) I plead earnestly to sleep a little longer, yet do not regard that, for I tell you of it before on purpose, and I shall thank you when once I am up, for not letting me have my will. Thus tell thy self aforehand, that though under a drowsiness, and slumber of spirit, thou art ready to plead for the flesh, and to feel some inclinations to fulfil its lusts, and art very loth to let them go unsatisfied, yet, if thou art but resolute, not to comply with thy own foolish and unreasonable desires, thou wilt heartily thank thy self; I mean, be entirely glad, when thy eyes are open, that thou hast overcome thy self, and that Wisdom and Reason, and Conscience have got the day. Resolve to remember this when temptation comes the next time to assault thee, and play the man.

Having laid down these directions, by way of prevention against the time of conflict, to prepare the soul aforehand, that in the assault it may not be vanquished, I come now to the Christians behaviour in the *fit*, and *paroxysm* it self, when the lusts of the flesh are stirring. And the great Rule to be observed here, is this:

As soon as ever thou perceivest thine affections, and lusts begin to grow inordinate, and thy inferior appetites to rebel, take thy self to task forthwith, and resist them with all thy might. Do not stay a moment, delay is unutterably dangerous: who but a mad man that sees the Stable or Barn hard by his dwelling house just beginning to catch fire, would stand still, and say, let it alone a little, I would see what would come of it; two or three minutes indulgence to the flame will embolden it without expecting his leave or permission any longer, to devour, and rage, and consume, and carry all before it in despight of his mightiest resistances; when a little at first might have saved that vast damage, which his folly and loytering hath occasioned. How contemptible were those fires at first, that in few hours have triumpht over stately Palaces, and turn'd sometimes vast Cities into heaps of dust and ashes? How small an infirmity, and distemper neglected, hath ushered in the most fatal sickness? And how often hath a trifling bruise or strain, been preface to a *Gangrene*, and the prick of a pin or thorn, not lookt after time enough, enforced the cutting off a leg, or arm, nay, proved mortal, and uncurable? Advantages to *good*, like *Arithmetical progressions*, rise slowly, in fair and even intervals, but advantages to *ill*, like *Geometrical*, grow up presently from little to vast excesses.

——— *Facilis descensus Averni:*
Sed revocare gradum, superasque evadere ad auras,
Hic labor, &c. Virg. Æn. 6.

Motion to *ill* is downwards, and like the descent of heavy bodies, collects a new *Impetus*, and *moveth* every step, with a swiftness perpetually increasing, and (if not stopt early) soon irresistible. Mischief springs apace, grows tall and large, and adult suddenly, as *Jonahs gourd* did, in a night. Our passage in sin is with wind and tide increasing; but in holiness, with both against us. To seek the things above is a supernatural motion, and therefore difficult, but the contrary, is natural and therefore easie, ἁδῦμὸν τὸ κατὰ φύσιν, τὸ δὲ βίαιον λυπηρὸν, as the Philosopher well determines. Evil is now akin to us since our degeneracy, and hath vast advantages on its side, if once it gets an allowed harbour, and entertainment in our breast.

Galilæo, & after him *Gassendus*, and others have demonstrated, that heavy bodies in their descent, do in equal times transmit unequal spaces, continually increasing according to the progression of *odd numbers*, *Es. gr.* If in one pulse, a Bullet fall perpendicularly, one inch, in the next, it will three inches, in the 3d. 5. in the 4th 7, &c. till the swiftness grow immense and unutterable.

The Enquiry then before us, is, by what Methods a Christian ought to address himself to battel, in this spiritual warfare, how he may so bid defiance to his enemies, as to daunt and vanquish them. Let these Rules therefore be observed for resisting and quelling thy lusts, and inordinate affections in their first salleys, and in the commencement of the insurrection.

Rule 1. Awe them with the authority of thy Reason, and understanding; it is infinitely unbeseeming a man, that his lower appetites should grow mutinous and untractable, that the τὸ ἄλογον ἐν ψυχῇ καὶ θνητὸν, the inferiour and brutish faculties of our souls, should rebel against the τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν, that soveraign faculty of Reason; the Scythians are reported, when their slaves took arms, to have dasht the sneaking rebels presently out of countenance, by shewing their whips, that well-known weapon. How soon doth the presence of a grave Magistrate allay a popular tumult if he comes in soon enough, in the beginning of the Riot.

Ille regit dictis animos, & pectora mulcet. Virg. Æn. 1.

God hath made Reason the Magistrate of the little World, he hath given it a Commission to keep the peace in our souls. And so far as our minds are illustrated, and governed by right reason, so far do they partake of the image of God, of whose glorious mind one of the best and clearest conceptions we can have, is, that it is *infinite and eternal Reason*. Do thy *passions* begin to rise in arms? do they grow disordered

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dered and unruly? Let thy *reason* come out to them, and ask whether they know their *Master*? And let thy soul blush, with infinite scorn, that ever these base slaves should usurp the throne of their *rightful Lord*, and unman thee, by deposing *Reason*, which is all thou hast to shew that thou art not a beast. What an extream silly thing is a man in passion? Nothing can be more ridiculous and contemptible. Out of love and pity to thy self, O man, do not affront and disgrace thine immortal soul any more, by suffering any malepart and sawcy passion to outrage and assassinate thy Reason. That was a generous Rule of *Pythagoras*—— *πέμπτον δὲ μάλιστα αἰχύνου σαυτόν.* Let a man use great reverence and manners to himself. Be ashamed (friend) to do any vile or dishonest action before thy self; though no body be conscious, yet thy soul is, and thou canst not run away from that. What good will it do thee to contradict the dictates of thine own mind? Is it possible for thee to be at peace, when thou fallest out with thy self? Thou justifiest all the injuries in the world that others do thee, for thou dost thy self daily injuries ten millions of times greater, than the greatest others can do to thee. Whoever thou art that despisest thy own Reason, and permittest every silly lust to abuse *thee*, by scorning *that*; thou art a false Traytor to thy own soul. There are but a very few men that are in their wits, the far greatest part of mankind, in the greatest matters, in the highest concernments of *a man*, are besides themselves; for a mans own self must be *a reasonable creature*; and therefore not to govern ones own mind and affections by Reason, is to be mad and distracted; if he that looks not to his Family is worse than an Infidel, what then is he that looks not to his *mind?* what confused *Chaos* are most mens minds,—— *rudis indigestaque moles?* A man makes a fool of himself as oft as he prefers his passion before his reason; the Philosopher gives us the sum of this Rule excellently, *μὴ ἀλογίστως σαυτὸν ἔχειν ἀεὶ μᾶλλον ἤθιζε.* Accustom thy self to act every where like a *reasonable creature.*

Pyth. in Carm.

Ovid.

Carm. Pytha.

If thy distempered affections, and lusts, slight the authority of thy Reason, as thou art a man; bid thy conscience do its office, as thou art a Christian. Try to awe them with Gods written word, thus our Saviour thrice repuls'd the Tempter, *Mat.* 4. 4, 6, 10. by producing Scripture to confront him, *It is written*, &c. Ask thy heart if it knows that hand, whether it dares rebel against the express Commands, Statutes, and Ordinances of the living God. Bring out of the Register of conscience, the Laws of him that made thee, oppose some clear text of holy Writ, that comes into thy mind, against that very lust that is now

Rule 2.

rising *Ex. Gr.* If it be carnal fear, *Isa.* 51. 12. If love of the world, 1 *Joh.* 2. 15. If revenge, *Rom.* 12. 19. If impatience under affliction, *Jam.* 1. 12. If diffidence in Gods promises, *Numb.* 23. 19. If immoderate anger, *Ephes.* 4 26. If pride and arrogance, and self-assuming, *Mat.* 5. 3. & 11. 29, *&c. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of such artillery* ! whose conscience is rich in these Memoirs!

Mat. 13. 52. Store thy mind with this sacred treasure, that as a Scribe instructed for the Kingdom of heaven, thou mayst (upon all occasions) bring forth out of thy treasure things new and old. Hold such Scriptures as are point-blanck contrary to the Temptation, before thy conscience; if it would turn away, compel it to look upon them, and think, I am Gods creature, I must obey him, Did ever any rebel against him and

Terence. prosper, *Eine ego ut adversor* ? Is it wisely done of me, to resist my Maker? to try which is strongest, a poor worm, or the Almighty God? And if the love of Gods Commands will not constrain thee, let the terrors, the thunders, and lightnings of his Threats perswade thee, which are all levelled against wilful sinners. And it is not safe standing (surely) in the very Canons mouth. Peruse those two Scriptures, and tremble to venture on any known breach of the Law of thy God, *Deut.* 28. 58. & *Isa.* 45. 9.

Rule 3. If all this effect nothing, then draw the Curtain, take off the vail from before thy heart, and let it behold the God that searcheth it, *Jer.* 17. 10. *Heb.* 4. 13. Shew it the Majesty of the Lord, see how that is described, *Isa.* 6. 1, 2, 3. Ask thy soul whether it sees the living God, that seeth it? Whether it is aware whose eye looks on, *Gen.* 16. 13, 14. Whether it hath no respect for God himself, who stands by, and whose pure and glorious eyes, *Hab.* 1. 13. pierce through and through thee. Tell thy heart again and again, that God will not be mocked; that *he is a God of knowledg, and by him actions are weighed*; that he is

1 Sam. 2. 3. *a jealous God too, and will by no means clear the guilty.* Bid it consider well and look to it self, for God will bring to light every hidden thing of dishonesty; he that now sees, will judg it. Speak to thy unruly lusts as the Town-clerk of *Ephesus* wisely did to the mutinous Citizens, *Act.* 19. 40. *Sirs, we are in danger to be called in question for this days uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this tumult.*

Rule 4. If these great *real* arguments be slighted, try whether an argument *ad hominem*, drawn from sense, will prevail. Awe thy lusts then with the bitterness of thine own experience. Consider how often thou hast rued their disorders; what dismal consequences have followed upon their

their transports, and how dearly thou hast paid heretofore for thy connivance at them. Bethink thy self on such a fashion as this. T'other day I was angry, and behaved my self uncomely, put the whole company, or family out of order, disobliged such a dear and faithful friend, by my rashness and folly, in uttering hasty words before I weighed them. O how did I repent me afterwards? How ashamed, and abashed, and confounded was I, when I came to my self? So at another time thus and thus I miscarried my self, and these are the fruits and cursed effects of my *yielding to the beginnings of sin*, and shall I go now and repeat my madness? Had I not smart enough for my folly before; but must I needs play the *fool* and the *beast* again? Ask thy self what thou ailest to forget all the sighs and groans, and bitter tears that thy lust hath already cost thee? and yet would the impudent sin be committed once more? πᾶ τὰς φρένας ἐπτοήσασαι: where are thy wits, man, if thou goest about it. *Sic notus Ulysses?* Was it so sweet a thing to lye under the horrour and agony of a wounded conscience, and under Gods rebukes in secret the last time, that thou must needs venture again? Why, wilt thou hurt thy soul, and become a Devil to thy self? Why wilt thou needs break thy peace, by consenting to sin, and not only so, but torment thy self, and kindle a hell in thine own bosome? and all this in despight of all thy warnings? *Ictus Piscator sapit*, the burnt Child dreads the fire: But it seems thou art in love with misery, and weary of thy joy and comfort. Thou hast a mind to be cursed, wretchedness and woe and death are it seemeth grown so amiable in thine eyes, as to become thy deliberate choice. Thus upbraid thy self, and do it so long and loud till thou fetchest thy soul again to it self, out of that swoon and lethargy which besotteth it. Give not over chiding and reproaching thy self, till thou makest thy heart sensible and considerate. Theocrit. in Cyclop.

Labour to cure thy lustings and affections in the first beginning of their disorders, by Revulsion, by drawing the stream and tide another way. As Physitians stop an *Hæmorragie, or bleeding* at the Nose by breathing the *Basilique* vein in the arm, or opening the *Saphæna* in the foot, so may we check our carnal affections, by turning them into spiritual ones, and those either, *Rule* 5.

1. Of the *same nature*, *Ex. gr.* Catch thy worldly sorrow at the rise, and turn thy mourning into godly sorrow. If thou must needs weep, weep for some-what that deserves it. Be the occasion of thy grief what it will, loss of estate, relations, &c. I am sure thy sins are a juster occasion, for they brought that occasion of mourning upon thee, be it what it will, that thou art now in tears for. Art thou troubled at any danger, full

full of fears, heart-aking, and confusion? O forget not the *Mother-evil* sin, let that have but its due share, and there will not be much left to spare of these affections for other things.

Is thy desire, thy love, thy joy too busie about some earthly trifle, some temporal good thing? Pray them to look up a little, and behold thy God, who is altogether lovely, *in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore*, Psalm. 16.11. and let everlasting shame stop thy mouth, if thou darest affirm any thing in this wretched world worthy to be named once with the living God for Rivalship, and competition in thy heart, [a] sure I am he is the fountain and measure of all goodness. Let but the first and soveraign Good have its due of thy love and desire, thy delight and joy, and the remainder will be little enough for thy creature-comforts. Oh how great a folly is it to doat on husks, and over-look the bread in thy fathers house, *Jer.*2.12,13.

[a] καὶ δόσον ἀυτῦ μετέχειν ἔχεις καλὰ καὶ ὡραῖα καὶ σωζόμενα. καὶ δοσον δὲ ἐν λείπει ἢ, ἀτυχεῖ καὶ διαλυόμενα. καὶ φθειρόμενα. Max. Tyr. dissert. 1.

2. Turn thy carnal affections into spiritual ones of a contrary nature. *Ex. gr.* Allay thy worldly sorrow by spiritual joy. Try whether there be not enough in *All-sufficiency* it self, to compensate the loss of any outward enjoyment, whether there will be any great miss or want of a broken Cistern, when thou art at the fountain head of living waters, whether the light of the Sun cannot make amends for the expiring of a Candle. Chastise thy carnal fears by hope in God. Set on work the grace contrary to the lust that is stirring, if it be pride and vain-glory in the applause of men, think how ridiculous it were for a criminal to please himself in the esteem and honour his fellow-prisoners render him, forgetting how guilty he is before his Judge. If thou beginnest to be powred loosely out, and as it were dissolved in frolick mirth and joviality, correct that vainness and gayety of spirit by the grave and sober thoughts of death, and judgment, and eternity.

Rule 6. If this avail not, fall instantly to prayer, and indeed all along the whole encounter with thy lusts, *Pray continually*; lift up thy heart to God with sighs and groans unutterable: *Oh that thou wouldst rend the heavens and come down!* Tell him, thy lusts are his enemies, as well as thines; tell him they are too strong for thee; beg of him that he would interpose, and make bare his arm, and get himself a glorious name, *Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord, awake as in the ancient daies, in the generations of old. Art not thou it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the Dragon?* Intreat him, of all love, to pity thee, even by his very bowels, and not to let the enemy triumph over thee. Tell him thou knowest

Isa. 51. 9.

not

not what to do, but thy eyes are towards him. Bemoan thy self before him, and plead his glory with him, and his truth and faithfulness. Spread his own gracious promises in his eyes, *Psal.* 27. 14. *Isa.* 40. 28, 29, 30, 31. *Psal.* 55. 22. 1 *Pet.* 5. 7.

Such Ejaculations or Meditations as these are mighty useful, Gods children find them so in the very paroxisme and assault. But if the Temptation continue, get into thy Closet, and humble thy self greatly before thy God, throw thy self at his feet, tell him thou wilt not rise till he hath given thee a token for good, no, thou art resolved there to lye hanging on him, and not to let him go untill he bless thee. O how welcome is every honest heart to the Father of Spirits, when it comes on such an errand, and in such a manner to the throne of grace! God cannot chuse but melt in pity and tenderness over his poor desolate ones, when he sees the anguish of their souls. *How can I give thee up, O Ephraim? my bowels are troubled for thee, they will not give me leave to forget thee. Is Ephraim my dear son? I do earnestly remember him, I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord.* Give not over wrestling like *Jacob*, *Gen.* 32. 26, 27, 28. till thou *risest Israel*, one who hast power with God and prevailest. And it is worth observing, that the Lord takes pleasure to be called *the mighty God of Jacob*, and the *Lord God of Israel*, as if he reckoned it an honour, that once the worm *Jacob* wrestled with his omnipotence, and overcame him, he seems to glory in his being conquered, and chuseth that for his name, and for his memorial throughout generations, which is an everlasting monument, that a poor frail man got the day of him. So much doth the effectual fervent prayer of the Righteous prevail. Jer. 31. 20. Isa. 49. 14.

Perhaps sometime it may be requisite to joyn secret fasting with thy prayer. It may be, the Devil that tempts thee is of that kind, that will not go out but by prayer and fasting, *Mat.* 17. 21. Thus *Daniel* lay prostrate at Gods feet, *till a hand touched him, and set him upon his knees, and the voice said to him, O Daniel greatly beloved*, &c. Dan. 10. 2, 3, compared with 10, 11. and with 18, 19, verses.

When thou hast done this, Rise up, and buckle on the *shield of faith, which is able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked one*, Ephes. 6. 16. Cloath thy soul with an heroick confidence, in the power and faithfulness of thy God, and in the name and majesty of the Lord of hosts, bid battel to thy lusts, and to all the powers of darkness. Take heed of going out in thy own single strength, for lust *hath cast down many strong men wounded.* While thou art keeping thine own heart with all diligence, forget not by faith to bring the great keeper of Israel Rule 7. Prov. 7. 26.

Iſrael in. If any other man could have kept his own heart, ſure the man after Gods own heart could have done it.---*Si Pergama dextrâ Defendi poſſent, etiam hac defenſa fuiſſent.* But the matter of *Uriah* and *Bathſheba* ſtands on record to all poſterity to the contrary: For *except the Lord keep the City, the watchman waketh but in vain*, Pſalm 127. 1. Do not venture to grapple with the roaring Lyon, but in the ſtrength of the Lyon of the Tribe of *Judah*, who is alſo the Lamb of God, and the great ſhepherd of *Iſrael*, *that carries his lambs in his boſome*; and whither ſhould the purſued Lamb betake it ſelf, but into that ſhepherds arms? *in time of trouble* (ſpiritual as well as other) *he will hide thee in the ſecret of his Tabernacle, in his pavilion will he hide thee, and ſet thee as upon a rock*, Pſal. 27. 5. He never fails the eyes of them that look up to him, nor makes his people aſhamed of their hope. What time thou art afraid truſt in him. His name is a ſtrong tower, Caſt thy care upon him, and expect the ſame pity from thy God, which the men of *Jabeſh Gilead* found from *Saul*, when *Nahaſh* (the barbarous Ammonite) would have put out their right eyes, *To morrow ere the Sun be hot ye ſhall have help*, 1 Sam. 11. 9. If the King of *Iſraels* bowels yearned over thoſe poor men, ſhall not the bowels of the God of *Iſrael* over thoſe that fear him? Yes, upon his honour, truth, and faithfulneſs; he will not ſuffer that cruel *Nahaſh* (to allude to the ſignification of the word) that old Serpent, to have his will upon them: if he doth not come *to day*, he will *to morrow* e're the Sun be hot. *Lift up your heads therefore O ye gates, and be ye lift up ye everlaſting doors; and the King of glory ſhall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD ſtrong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battel*, Pſalm 24. 7, 8. Thus was *Joſeph* reſcued from the *Archers that ſhot at him, and ſorely grieved him. His bow abode in ſtrength, and the arms of his hands were made ſtrong by the arms of the mighty God of Jacob*, Gen. 49, 23, 24.

Virg. Æneid.

Iſa. 40. 11.

נחש Serpens hebr.

I come at length to the Uſe.

Uſe.

1. *Information.* We are to learn hence, That our ſouls are not as they came out of the Father of Spirits hands, they appear as it were wrong riſen in the world, and begin to tread awry the very firſt ſteps they meaſure on the ſtage of Earth. All the Symptoms of degeneracy are upon them. The beſt of men that ever yet bleſt the earth with their Reſidence upon it (except that *Son of man* who was only ſo by the mothers ſide, being by the *Fathers* the only begotten Son of the eternal God) had fleſh luſting in them unto ſin. Which is as convincing an Argument, that humane nature is blemiſhed, and infected, that it hath received a *μίασμα*, a ſtain

a ſtain and venome, as the ἐξανθήματα are of a peſtilential diſeaſe, whoſe breakings out, diſplay the contagion within. If the *Carbuncle* and the *Tokens* proclaim the *Plague*; or the ſpots diſcover a peſtilential feaver? or the *Variolæ* (thoſe peſtulous efflorescencies, which we commonly name the *Small Pox*) argue the præcipitation of the blood, by ſome latent malignity; certainly the luſtings of the fleſh in all men, demonſtrate that the very nature of man on Earth is now blaſted, and corrupted.

Methinks the *Divine perfection*, and *our own imperfection*, are the two greateſt Senſibles in the world, both of them equally, that is, immenſely clear, and diſcernable. For, the *former* is no leſs illuſtriouſly undeniable, then is the being, light, and beauty of the Sun in the Firmament at noon-day: And the *latter* is no leſs evident and conſpicuous than the obſcurity and horror of Midnight-darkneſs. Not to *ſee* the one is to be ἄθεος *without God in the world*, and not to feel the other (for it is like the Ægyptian darkneſs, *Exod.* 10. 21. that may be felt by all that are not *paſt feeling*) is to be *without* or *beſides* ones ſelf.

Now ſince all the reaſon in the world conſents to the truth of that Aphoriſm of the Philoſopher, (καλὸν δὲ καὶ τὸ χίνεται) that the beſt and moſt excellent mind is the parent of the Univerſe, and an Almighty everliving goodneſs is the Source, and root of all things, ſince heaven and earth ſay *Amen*, and again *Amen*, *Hallelujah* to that Oracle of the Pſalmiſt, *The work of God is honourable and glorious*, Pſal. 111. 3. *And all that God made was very good*, Gen. 1. 31. No wonder if it puzzled all Philoſophy τὸ θεῖον τὸ κακὸν; Whence humane nature came to be thus vitiated and debauched? What are the fountains of this great *Deep* of ſin within us, which like the troubled Sea, is perpetually thus caſting out mire and dirt? Sure enough ſo univerſal an effect as this calamity of mankind, muſt have a cauſe as univerſal.

Hierocles moſt divinely concludes, ἑνὸς μία ἄλλη πρόσεστι τῆς τῶν πάντων ποιήσεως, διὰ λόγος ἀιτία, πλὴν τῆς καθ' ὑπεροχὴν ἀγαθότητος, ἀγαθὸς γὰρ φύσει ὁ θεὸς, ἀγαθῶν δ' ὑπάρξεως αἰτία· ἀγαθὸς δὲ ἀεὶ ἀγαθοῦ γίνεται φθόνος, in Carm. Pyth. Iſa. 57. 20.

The *Socinians* here, and others, will have us believe that we all are born, as innocent as *Adam* in Paradiſe; that is (ſay they) in an *æquilibrium* and perfect indifferency to *good* and *evil*, aſſigning no other cauſe of the general corruption of mens lives and manners, but the infection of example, and evil cuſtom, which is methinks as wiſe a gueſs, as to affirm the Wolf and Vulture to be bred and hatcht with as ſweet and harmleſs a nature, as the innocent Lamb, or loving Turtle, but only the naughty behaviour, and ill example of their Anceſtors, and companions, have debauched them into ravenouſneſs, and ill manners.

The *Manichees* (as St. *Auſtin* tells us, who was himſelf for ſeveral years before his converſion of that hereſie) thought that all the evil in the world ſprang from an Almighty and an eternal principle of evil,

counter-working, and over-bearing God, whom they held the oppofite eternal principle of goodneſs. But ſince the very formal notion of God, involveth infinite perfection, and that of ſin, meer imperfection, it is a perfect contradiction, that evil ſhould be infinite, if good be ſo; It were to make imperfection perfect, and meer impotency Omnipotent. Therefore there can be but one God, who is Almighty goodneſs. And as poſſible it is, that the Sun ſhould darken the world by ſhining, as Almighty goodneſs ſhould do any hurt in the world, or make any evil. God is the Author of all the good in the world, but ſin and miſery are of our making, *Hoſ.* 13. 9.

Much wiſer than either of the two former, was the conjecture of the *Pythagoreans* and *Platoniſts*, though Heathens, who having nothing elſe to conſult (as wanting the divine Revelation of holy Scripture) but their own *faculties* embraced the conceit, that all humane ſouls were created in the beginning *upright*, and placed by God in happier manſions, in purer and higher regions of the Univerſe, until at length they did, ἀποβαλεῖν τὴν θείαν ἀξίωσιν, τῆς θεοῦ χορῆς, as *Hierocles* phraſeth it, *i. e.* till they fell from the *divine life*, and became inhabitants of earthly Tabernacles, bringing their fallen and degenerate natures along with them. This opinion had of old the general conſent of the *Jews*, as appeareth, *Job.* 9. 2. and yet hath, as *Menaſſ. Ben Iſrael* in his Book *De Reſurrectione mortuorum*, witneſſeth. Among the Chriſtians *Origen* is in the number of its Sectaries, in his books περὶ ἀρχῶν, and ſome few of the Ancients.

But as much as is neceſſary for us to know about this great Enquiry, God hath (bleſſed be his goodneſs) ſufficiently revealed in the three firſt Chapters of *Geneſis*, compared with *Pſal.* 51. 5. *Eccleſ.* 7. 29. *Rom.* 12 5, &c. And he is as wiſe as he need be in ſo great a point, that knows how to underſtand theſe Scriptures according to the Analogy of Faith, and conſiſtency with the divine perfections, and that ſo believeth them, as to put that and no other ſenſe and interpretation upon them, which is worthy of the glorious attributes, and excellent Majeſty of the living God: Although ſome difficulties will remain perhaps inſuperable to us, in this our preſent eſtate on earth.

Uſe 2. *Exhortat.*

I have already in ſome meaſure diſcovered the Myſteries and ſecrets of this bleſſed art of checking ſin in the beginnings of it; Let me now perſwade the practiſe of theſe holy Rules, let us reſolve in the ſtrength of Chriſt to reſiſt theſe luſtings of the fleſh. Take the exhortation of the Apoſtle, *Watch ye, ſtand faſt in the faith, quit your ſelves like men*, 1 *Cor.* 16. 13.

Ἄνεμος ἴσα φίλοι μήσασθαι δὲ δυσφόρος ἀλκῆς. Hom.

Let

Let me press this with a few considerations.

1. The more thou yieldest, the more thou mayest. Sin is unsatiable, it will never say *it is enough*. Give it an inch, it will take an ell: See the sad example of *Peter* denying his Lord, *Mat.* 26. 1. He was only timerous, he follows afar off, *v.* 58. 2. At the next step he denies his Lord openly before them all, *v.* 70. 3. He adds an oath to it, *v.* 72. And lastly, *v.* 74. he falls a cursing and swearing, as if he meant to out-sin the vilest there. It is no wisdom to try conclusions between fire and Gunpowder in the heap. Who but a fool would unlock the door of his house, when it is beset with Thieves, and excuse it, he did but turn the key, that was all. Why, he need do no more, to undo himself, they will easily do all the rest.

2. It is the quarrel of the Lord of Hosts, in which thou fightest, let thy courage rise in proportion to the goodness of thy cause, and the honour of that great Prince and Captain under whose banner thou servest. Upon thy good behaviour and address in Arms, depends much of the renown and honour of Christianity. A cowardly Soldier is the reproach of his Commanders. Thou hast a noble General, O Christian, that hath done, and finished perfectly whatever concerns thy Redemption from the powers of darkness. *To him that overcometh will he give to sit on his throne, even as he overcame, and is set down on his fathers throne*, Rev. 3. 23. Do valiantly and worthily. Follow thy victorious Leader, let all that know thee, see that Religion is no mean and feeble thing; that the School of Christ breeds the excellent of the earth, that the Divine life is the most powerful principle in the World, that the Spirit of God in thee, and his grace, is stronger than all thy lusts and corruptions. Not he that talks most, or professeth most, but he that acts and lives most as a Christian, shall be the *man whom the King delights to honour*. *Cæsarem vehis & fortunam cæsaris.*

3. The lusts of the flesh are thy greatest enemies, as well as Gods, *they war against thy soul*, 1 Pet. 2. 11. To resist them feebly, is to do, not only the work of the Lord, but of thy Soul negligently.

4. It is easier vanquishing at first in comparison. A fire newly kindled is soon quenched, and a young thorn or bramble easily pulled up. The fierce Lyon may be tamed, when a whelp: but if thou stay a little, there will be no dealing with a Lust any more, than with a savage Beast of prey. Grace will lose, and corruption get strength continually by delaying.

5. If thou resistest, the victory is thine, *James* 4. 7. And in my Text, *Walke*, &c. *and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.* Thou canst never be conquered, if thou wilt not yield. Stand but to it, and thou art invincible, while thou art unwilling, all the Devils in hell cannot

force thee to sin. Temptation puts on its strength, as the will is. Cease but to love the sin, and the temptation is answered. Indeed, if thou chusest to be a slave, thou shalt be one. Nothing but thy own choice can undo thee.

Sixthly, Consider what thou dost, if thou fulfillest the lusts of the flesh, thou provokest thy heavenly Father, rebellest against him, and *Rebellion is as witchcraft, and stubbornness as Idolatry.* Thou *crucifiest Jesus Christ afresh, and puttest him to open shame.* Is this thy love, and thanks to thy Lord, to whom thou art so infinitely beholding? Canst thou find in thy heart to put thy Spear again in his side? Hath he not suffered yet enough? Is his bloody passion nothing? Must he bleed again? Ah monster of ingratitude! Ah perfidious Traytor as thou art, thus to requite thy Master! *Again,* thou grievest thy Comforter, and is that wisely done? Who shall comfort thee, if he depart from thee grieved? Or is it ingenuous, thus unworthily to treat that noble Guest, to affront Gods sacred Spirit to his very face? and in despight and mockery of him, to side with his Enemy, the Flesh? Is this thy kindness to thy best Friend, thy faithful Counsellor, thy infallible Guide, thy Minister, and Oracle, thy sweet and only Comforter? What need I add, that thou breakest thy peace, woundest thy conscience, forfeitest the loss of Gods countenance, and makest a gap in the divine protection for all evil to rush in at.

7ly. And lastly, Consider the invaluable benefit of resisting, of not fulfilling the lusts of the flesh, in two great Instances.

First, Unutterable joy and pleasure will be shed abroad in thy Soul, as often as thou gettest the day. I know no greater triumph than that of a Christian, when *he is more than conqueror through Christ that loves him.* O the peace, the joy, and holy glorying in the Lord, and in the power of his might, that a good man is even ravisht, and caught up into the third Heavens with, when the Lord covers his head in the day of Battel, and lifts it up above his spiritual enemies. To vanquish ones self, is a nobler exploit than to subdue a City, *Prov.* 16. 32. Nay, a vaster Conquest, then if one could, with that great *Macedonian* Captain, atchieve the empty title of the Vanquisher of the world.

2. Every Conquest will encrease thy strength and dexterity against the next assault: So that when the vanquisht lust recruits its forces, thou wilt be able to outvie thy self, and become more dextrous every time.

Nay, the mortifying of one earthly member (like the cutting off a limb from the natural body) will make the whole body of sin tremble, all the rest of thy Lusts will fare the worse, and by consent languish. So that every victory over any one corruption, weakens that, and all the rest, and breaks the way for future Conquests.

How

How Miniſters or Chriſtian Friends may, and ought to apply themſelves to Sick Perſons, for their good, and the diſcharge of their own Conſcience?

Job 33. 23, 24.

If there be a meſſenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thouſand, to ſhew unto man his uprightneſs; then he is gracious unto him, and ſaith, Deliver him from going down into the pit, I have found a ranſom.

THeſe words are part of *Elihu*'s diſcourſe uttered by way of Reprehenſion and Conviction to *Job*, and by way of Vindication and Apology for God in his dealings with men; and although he premiſeth this, that God giveth no account of his matters, *ver.* 13. yet he doth *ex abundanti*, give an account for God, and makes a defence, or gives a *rationale* of Gods proceedings with men, &c. where he ſhews that it is not mans torment or ruin that God deſires, but his reformation and amendment: And that it may appear how ſincerely and fervently he deſires it, he ſhews that there are ſeveral ways and means which God uſeth, which are moſt powerful and likely to produce it.

1. He ſpeaks to men in dreams, *ver.* 15, &c.
2. (When that will not do) by afflictions, *ver.* 19, &c.

3. To

3. To make those afflictions more intelligible and more effectual, he sends a *messenger*, &c. This is the business of the Text, *If there be with him*, &c. wherein you may observe two parts.

1. A supposition v. 23. *If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter*, &c. 2. A position, ver. 24. *Then he is gracious to him*, &c. The words may be called, the sick mans cordial, or his restorative, wherein you may observe: 1. The patient, expressed in the word *him*. 2. The disease, his danger, and misery—*he is going down to the pit*. 3. The Physician, who is described: 1. *Ab officio*, by his office, *a messenger*. 2. *Ab opere*, by his work, *an interpreter*. 3. *A præstantiâ*, a rare man, *one of a thousand*—*multis è millibus unus*. 4. The Physick, *to shew unto a man his uprightness*. 5. The cure, *then he is gracious*, &c. Where are considerable:

1. The quality of it, the kind of the cure, deliver him from going down to the pit, *i. e.* from mortal sickness.

2. The spring of it, Gods grace, he is gracious.

3. The meritorious cause of it, I have found a ransom.

4. The declaration of it, he saith, *&c.*

The difficulties are neither many nor great, yet some things there are which need explication; *If a messenger*] an Angel; *i. e.* by office, not by nature, for so the word is oft used in Scripture, both in the Old Testament, Mal. 3. 1. *Behold I will send my messenger*, Hebr. מלאכי my Angel, which the infallible Interpreter, the Lord Jesus, tells us was meant of *John* the Baptist, Mat. 11. 10. *This is he of whom it is written, Behold I send a messenger*, &c. and in the New Testament, *Rev.* 2. and 3. where the Pastors of the several Churches are called Angels: and so it is most fitly understood here, both because God did then and still doth most generally use the Ministry of men rather than Angels in counselling and comforting afflicted men; and because he is called one of a thousand, a phrase which implies as his excellency and fitness for that work, so the insufficiency of most of the same kind for it; which must not be charged upon the meanest of Gods elect Angels.

An interpreter] *viz.* of the mind and will of God: Christ is the great interpreter, *Joh.* 1. 18. but he when he ascendeth on high gave forth this gift, and left us interpreters in his stead, *Eph.* 4. 11. *&c.*

To shew unto a man his righteousness] *i. e.* mans own righteousness (to say nothing of the other senses); for, it *is* the sin and unrighteousness of a man which causeth his disease, and the sense of that sin which makes his disease bitter and formidable: sin is the sting of every affli-

ction;

ction; now then *omnis curatio fit per contraria*, all cures are wrought by contraries; when therefore a faithful Messenger or Minister of Christ having made the sick man sensible of his sin, and afterwards of the pardon of it, and when he comes to discover to him his righteousness, uprightness, holiness, *then God is gracious*, &c. although it is not at all impossible that here may be a reference to Christs righteousness, for *Job* is no stranger to that, and the word ransom carries an evident relation thither. So that both may be conjoyned.

Then he (*i.e.* God) *is gracious*] God is always gracious in himself, in his own nature, but he is gracious to none, but in his own way, and upon his own terms. God is not gracious to unrighteous and unholy persons: but when men return from their sins, *&c. God is gracious, and saith*, *i.e.* God saith, *Deliver him*——He saith so, to his Minister, he gives him Commission to deliver him, *i.e.* to declare him to be delivered. God delivers men *authoritative & realiter*, Ministers only *Ministerialiter & declarative*: it is an usual phrase; Ministers are said to do, that which they declare God will do, Jer. 1. 10. *I have set thee over kingdoms and nations* (saith God to *Jeremiah*) *to root out, and pull down, and destroy*, *i.e.* *to declare that I will do it.*

I have found a ransom—I have received satisfaction, *i.e.* in the death of my Son, which was a ransom satisfactory for the sins of his people. And farther, it is by vertue of this ransom that Gods people are delivered, not only from hell, but from any other miseries. Indeed, as Divines distinguish of the resurrection of the godly, and the wicked, so the temporal deliverances which wicked men receive, they are the effects of common providence; but those which Christs members receive, they have as the fruits of Christs purchase. And well saith God, *I have found a ransom*: for it is beyond the wit of men or Angels to find out such an admirable way for mans salvation. Thus you have had the coherence, division, and sense of the words.

There are several Doctrines which these words would afford, but I shall forbear the very mention of them, and only speak of this one, which falls to my share.

Doct. That the seasonable instruction of sick and languishing persons, is a work as of great advantage, so of great skill and difficulty.

I need not spend much time in the proof, yet something must be said of it; there are two branches.

1. It is of great advantage. 2. It is of great difficulty.

1. That it is a work of great advantage. It is convenient to say something of this, because I take it to be a common mistake of many persons,

persons, they are apt to think, that sick-bed applications are in a manner useless and ineffectual: it may be a discouragement which the Devil proposeth to Ministers or others, to make them neglect this work, or be formal in it, especially when the persons are ignorant or profane: the Devil may suggest the invalidity of a sick-bed repentance, the customarinesse and hypocrisie of sick-bed desires, &c. Now to obviate such suggestions, consider these things.

1. That the instruction of sick persons is Gods institution, so you see in the Text——*a messenger, i. e.* one sent of God to this purpose: now Gods institutions are not in vain: every institution of God carries a promise in its bowels to him that doth not *ponere obicem*, that doth rightly use it: Ministers or Christian friends may go about it with much comfort, for it is Gods work, as he said, *Have not I commanded you*, &c? It is one of those ways (as you see in the Chapter) which God ordained to reclaim sinners: and when you attempt it, you may expect Gods concurrence. You may pray in faith for Gods assistance in his Ordinance.

2. Gods mercie is proposed by himself, and may be offered by Ministers, even to languishing persons: it is true, it must be done cautiously (as you shall hear) but it may be done. God doth indefinitely tender his mercy to all, and we must not limit where God limits not: Ministers may safely follow Gods example. And whereas it may be thought that such men only come to God as driven by necessity: you must know that God is so gracious, that he receives even such whom meer necessity drives to him, and indeed all true converts are first perswaded to come to God by the sense of their own necessities, though afterwards they are elevated to a more noble disposition: God never rejected any upon this ground: how many came to Christ meerly in sense of their bodily maladies, and were sent away with spiritual cure? Christ received her that came not to him, till she had in vain tried all other Physicians. So in that parable of the Prodigal (wherein God is pleased to represent the methods of his grace in the conversion and salvation of sinners) you shall find that God doth not reject that poor prodigal, because he was forced home by that, *Durum telum, necessitas*, by insuperable straits and difficulties.

3. Sick-bed repentance is not wholly impossible (though it be hard) sickness is one means that God useth to work repentance, God can work repentance even upon a sick-bed, and it is God that must do it, even in health; and to speak truly and strictly, although the means of repentance be more probable, and the truth of repentance more discernable in health than in sickness, yet the practise of repentance is

as

as hard a work in health as in ſickneſs, ſeeing in both caſes it is the great work of the omnipotent God, who hath ever challenged it as his royal prerogative to give repentance; whatever thoſe *hoſtes gratiæ Chriſti* (as *Auſtin* calls them) ſay to the contrary; ſo that in ſhort, with men, repentance is always impoſſible, *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his ſpots? then may ye alſo do good that are accuſtomed to do evil*, Jer. 13. 23. but with God it is always poſſible. And yet to prevent the abuſe of this, by a preſumptuous putting off repentance to the time of ſickneſs, and death, upon this pretence; I muſt add, that ſuch as put off repentance on ſuch a pretext do ſeldom meet with it. God doth ſeldom give repentance to ſuch perſons: and it is a general obſervation of all ſerious Divines; that late repentance is ſeldom true, though true repentance is never late, it being the juſt judgment of God, that they that intend to mock God by putting off repentance ſhould deceive themſelves, and die without repentance.

2. That it is a work of great difficulty might eaſily be demonſtrated, but that will appear in the further proſecution of it all along, only there are two Arguments which the Text ſuggeſts.

1. That it is a work which God hath put into the hands of his chief Officers, his Miniſters, who ought to be the moſt accompliſhed perſons of all others, *&c.* this is one of thoſe works for which God hath vouchſafed ſuch ſingular gifts unto his Meſſengers.

2. That is is not every Miniſter neither who is fit for this work, and therefore here it is required, that he be one of a thouſand.

But this I ſhall paſs over, and come to that which is allotted to me, the reſolution of this great and important caſe of Conſcience: *How Miniſters or Chriſtian friends may and ought to apply themſelves to ſick perſons for their good, and the diſcharge of their own conſciences.* I take it to be one of the hardeſt parts of the Miniſterial works to make ſeaſonable applications to ſuch perſons. I ſhall therefore endeavour to anſwer it, though not ſo fully as the point deſerves, yet ſo far as the brevity of this Exerciſe will permit, in theſe eight Propoſitions or Directions.

1. Endeavour muſt be uſed to underſtand the ſtate of the ſick perſon; As Phyſitians do by ſick perſons, they enquire into the manner of their life, diet, *&c.* it is a great ſtep to the cure, to know the Patients temper, becauſe as bodily ſo ſpiritual Phyſick muſt be ſuited to the temper, and diſpoſition, and condition of the Patient. And as Phyſitians take pains in this by conference with friends, and by examining the Patient; ſo ſhould Miniſters by diſcourſe with religious acquaintance, and by ſearching conference with the ſick perſons, endeavour to find out the

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truth, for why should not men be as accurate in healing mens souls, as their bodies? since the very Heathen could say, That all our care should be translated from the things of the body, to the soul, so *Epictetus* in his 63, Chapter, Ἀφῆρέσημέον τὸ ἐνδιατρίβειν τοῖς περὶ τὸ σῶμα, &c. And as for the body men prize those Physicians most that best know their temper, &c. so should sick persons prefer (*cæteris paribus*) that faithful Minister that hath most knowledg of them, &c.

2. The great business is to bring the sick man to a true sight of his state and condition: indeed this is an happy thing, whatever his condition be. If his condition be sound and good, then it is an happiness to know it, that he may have the comfort of it, if it be bad, yet it is an happiness to know it, that a man may be capable of counsel, and put into the way to amend it: it is true, evil men, like persons much in debt, care not to look into their books, and understand their debts, but they must be brought to it. And the worse thy condition is, the more art thou concerned to discover it, for to be ignorant of thy condition, if it be good, only hinders thee from comfort, but if it be bad, it hinders thee from salvation: you and they must both consider, that as the heart is always deceitful, so then especially for three reasons amongst others. 1. Then men are impotent and unable to examine themselves, their natural parts are weakned, the eyes of their mind clouded: their mind is diverted by bodily pains that it cannot attend, and so may sooner be cheated. 2. Then men are sloathful and listless as to all spiritual exercises: if even good men are sloathful in their most healthful times, how much more evil men in times of sickness? The listlesness of the body generally makes an answerable impression upon the faculties of the soul; that being a received truth amongst Physitians and Philosophers, and ratified by daily experience, that *mores animi, sequuntur temperamentum corporis.* 3. In times of sickness men are greedy of comfort, and so will catch even at a shadow, &c. Upon all these grounds there needs the more caution, to set before his eyes the folly and misery of self-deceit, especially in everlasting matters.

3. Ministers and others must take great heed lest while they avoid one extream, they run upon another, which is a common errour in practise; some for the prevention of despair, have made such unseasonable applications of comfort, as have begotten presumptuous hopes. Others again to prevent presumption, have so indiscreetly aggravated things as to render them hopeless, and so careless, &c. there must therefore be a prudent contemperation of things together: as the wise Physitian mixeth several ingredients, he puts in indeed things of a sharp and

and corroding nature, which may eat out or remove the noxious humours, but addeth to them things of a more gentle temperature, which by their lenity may correct the acrimony of the former: God himself sets us a copy by the mouth of *Samuel*, 1 Sam. 12. 20. *You have done all this wickedness*, there is the corrosions, he faithfully discovers that, and doth not dawbe with them, yet, lest the disease should rather be exasperated than removed, he adds this healing counsel, *yet turn not aside from following the Lord*, and this Cordial, v. 22. *The Lord will not forsake his people:* and *Ezra* follows it, Ezra 10. 2. *We have trespassed against God, and have taken strange wives, yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this, now therefore let us make a covenant with God.*

4. The same methods are not to be used to all sick persons: you might as well give the same pill to all diseased persons, whereas that which would cure one, will kill another; you may as well make one suit for all bodies: discreet Physitians diversifie their applications, according to the difference of the Patients disposition and condition; so here. And there are many differences to be eyed here.

1. Difference of tempers, whether tender, or rough and stubborn, as you read it is the husbandman's discretion that the fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is the cart-wheel turned upon the cummine, but the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod, *Isa.* 28. 27. so it must be the discretion of a Minister, to have respect to the different tempers of men, in his applications to them: it is said of Christ, he taught the Disciples as they were able to bear.

2. Difference of education and conversation, some have been nuzzled in ignorance, others brought up in the knowledg of the truth, not considering of this, occasions much mischief: Discourse to an ignorant person of the necessity of faith and repentance, you lose your labour oft times, he conceits he hath believed and repented; for he takes faith to be a believing, though without any grounds, That God hath pardoned him, and repentance a crying God mercy, *&c.* one must consider where foundations must be laid——and where we need only raise superstructions: some have had a loose and profane education, others civil and religious: the former require more terrour, the latter more caution, lest they deceive themselves.

3. Difference of guilt. Great difference is to be made in the handling of sinners of a smaller size, and inveterate sinners: as God expects, so Ministers must endeavour that sorrow may bear some proportion with the sin——*Peter* having sinned grievously, wept bitterly, *Mat.* 27. *ult.*

5. It is a very bad guide to follow the counſels or deſires of ſick perſons, or their carnal friends. It fares with faithful Miniſters, as with honeſt and able Phyſitians, that are many times ill thought of by the ſick man, and fooliſh friends, when they put him to pain, or trouble, they charge him with cruelty and delighting to torment the poor man unneceſſarily, and it may be think of diſcharging him, and getting a Phyſitian that will deal more gently with him: whereas indeed he is the ſick mans beſt friend, and many times ſhould he not pain him, he would kill him: ſo is it here, Come to a ſick man, he cries, Comfort for Gods ſake, ſo ſay his friends, and they think all is done, if they can get comfort: why, you ſhall have it, but in due time; you ſhall have eaſe, health, *&c.* but you muſt be contented to wait for it, and expect it in due order, firſt you muſt be ſick; oft times that Phyſick is the beſt, which makes you ſickeſt; you ſhall be healed, but if you would proceed regularly, and work a true cure, you muſt firſt have your wound ſearched, and then healed, elſe you have only a palleative cure, and the wound will feſter inwardly: and it is an horrible miſtake of ſick perſons, they think comfort is all they are to look after. I tell you, it is not preſent comfort, but everlaſting happineſs, you muſt make your buſineſs to get: it is not *Auguſtus* his εὐθανασία, to die quietly, like a Lamb, (as the vulgar phraſe it) but a Scripture εὐθανασία, to die the death of the righteous: it is not ſo much a calm, and ſweet, and eaſie paſſage, (the fiſhes have that, when they ſwim down the ſweet ſtream of *Jordan*, into the dead ſea, where they periſh) but a ſafe harbour; one may go to heaven in a ſtorm, and to hell in a calm; and which is better, judg you: thoſe wretches in *Pſal.* 73. have no bands in their death, and yet death hath dominion over them. Comfort is not the great buſineſs you need.

6. The ſame courſe for ſubſtance is to be taken for the converſion of ſick and healthful perſons, *&c.* there is but one way to heaven, for all perſons; and therefore conſider with your ſelves what you would do, if they were in health, and what were neceſſary then, why, that ſame courſe you muſt take now: and if it be more troubleſome to ſick perſons, they may thank themſelves for it, who neglected the time of their health, *&c.* indeed ſick men are apt to favour themſelves, and to think God will accept of leſs from them, than others, whereas, if poſſible, they have need to do more than others, and to make the more haſte, having the leſs time for their Work.

7. The greateſt care muſt be to keep ſick perſons from thoſe errours whereby ſuch perſons commonly miſcarry, ſuch as theſe,

1. Inſenſibleneſs of their danger, whereas the firſt ſtep to cure, is

to

to know ones malady. It is a dreadful thing to see poor ignorant and unconverted sinners, at the very brink of the pit, ready to drop into hell, and not at all affected with it, &c. If ever you mean to do them any good, you must awaken them out of that mortal sleep or lethargy, lighten their eyes with a conviction of their danger, lest they sleep the sleep of death.

2. Willingness to be deluded. You may know it thus: If a daubing Minister or friend offers comfort, how greedily they catch it: They will receive comfort upon any grounds, nay upon no grounds, but upon the bare words, it may be of a time-serving, and man-pleasing Minister. But let a serious and faithful Minister come to them, and shew them their sad, and sinful, and hazardous condition, and demonstrate it by irrefragable arguments, they will not yield to it. But as St. *Peter* speaks, 2 *Pet.* 3. 5. λανθάνει αὐτὸς τοῦτο θέλοντας, this they willingly are ignorant of. You must possess them with the folly of such a temper, the unavoidable misery of self-deluding persons, &c. and the dread of disappointment when too late.

3. Carelessness and listlessness; This is the temper of many, knowing the difficulty of believing, repenting, &c. and remembring their own guilt, they cast off the care of that, which they think will be to no purpose, &c. You must therefore possess them with the necessity of Christian carefulness; what madness it is to be careless now, which is the only season of caring to any purpose, &c. What folly it is to free themselves from the care of a few days, to ascertain to themselves everlasting care and torment, &c. Also you must possess them with the benefit of this care, and laying it to heart, &c. That it is Gods course in opening the heart, to stir up this care.

4. Resting in generals. *Dolosus versatur in generalibus.* This deceives many in Hell: You may discourse excellently against sin in the general, and raise in them some passion against it, yet not profit them at all, &c. For true repentance takes notice of particular sins, &c. And as generals have no existence, but in the particulars, according to principles of Philosophy: So it is sin in particular, which doth primarily affect the heart of a true penitent.

5. The concealment of some hidden way of wickedness, I believe, hath sent many to Hell, they would never make their disease known, through fear of shame, &c. As some persons have died of those diseases which they have smothered. It is true, a man is not bound to make confession of all his sins to a Minister, as we rightly assert against Papists: but yet all Divines grant, that in many cases it is both expedient and

and necessary to acknowledg thy wickedness to men, and to say nothing of those cases wherein it is sometimes necessary, nor of many reasons which make it frequentiy expedient, I shall only instance in one, which is sufficient of it self many times; that the Physician knowing more exactly thy malady, may more effectually proportion his remedy. Possess them with this in such cases, How infinitely better it is to have some shame before a friend, who will cover your shame, and hate to reproach you with it, than before all the world. Convince them, what folly it is to be unfaithful to themselves, *&c.*

8. Take heed of healing the souls of sick persons slightly. This we are very apt to. 1. From the sick mans greedy desire of comfort. 2. From the expectation and desire of carnal friends. 3. From our own careless hearts, that love not to put our selves to any trouble or reproach (which we shall meet with, if we be faithful in this case) however take heed of it, *Jer.* 8. 11. *They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace.* This is the case: A soul (whether in sickness or in health) must first be wounded, then healed. There must be sorrow and travel ere the Man child be brought forth. There must be true repentance and godly sorrow——deep sorrow, (They dawb, that tell you otherwise, and make God a lyar), Great heaviness of heart, *&c.* Repentance is neither a short, nor a superficial work.——Perswade them to wait Gods leisure, and in Gods way for the cure, not to precipitate your work: Perswade them not to be afraid of sorrows, troubles, *&c.* but rather to fear the want of it; for here is a common and a fatal mistake, most men are afraid of sorrow, and labour to drive away sorrow: Whereas indeed sorrow is the midwife of all true joy. Tears of penitential sorrow, are the streams that lead us to the Rivers of pleasure, which are at Gods right hand: It is none other than the Gate of Heaven, the fountain of comfort: And on the contrary, to be a stranger to godly sorrow, is one of the dreadfullest signs of a lost soul. The laughter of such a person, is a *Risus Sardonicus*, a deadly joy. Labour more to work a solid, then a sudden cure.

There are other directions I thought to have given, but these may suffice, and I will conclude all with two or three Uses, first to Ministers, then to people.

1. To Ministers. Hence we may learn the great difficulty of the Ministerial work, we see one reason why *Paul* said, *Who is sufficient for these things?* O what a sin and shame it is to see what persons venture upon this work? that such undertake to be shepherds of Christs Flock, that are

are hardly fit to be ſet with the dogs of the flock? *Father forgive them, they know not what they do.* Many act, as if they thought this were all the work of a Miniſter to make a few Sermons, read ſome Prayers, &c. No, no, a Miniſter muſt be throughly furniſhed to every good work. He muſt be apt and able for every work: This, among others. O what Angelical abilities doth it require! Acuteneſs to diſcern the ſick mans temper, knowledg to underſtand the nature of all Spiritual Diſeaſes, the Symptoms, the Prognoſticks, as alſo the Antidotes and Remedies. Wiſdom to make ſuitable, ſpeedy Applications. O how hard a caſe is it! Many ſick men can neither endure *morbum*, nor *remedium*, neither the diſeaſe of their ſouls, nor their remedy, &c. A Miniſter had need know all things, underſtand all perſons, diſcern the ſubtilties of mens hearts, and not be ignorant of the wiles of the Devil.

How many knots muſt he be able ſpeedily to untye? How many caſes muſt he be able to give ſpeedy reſolution to? And he muſt be ſuppoſed to have laid up with great induſtry, becauſe he muſt bring forth out of his Treaſure, *things both new and old.* O the difficulty! It is a ſad thing to conſider, that many ſouls do periſh, not only *vi morbi*, by the force of their Diſeaſe, but alſo *errore medici*, by the errour of their Phyſitian, by the miſtakes of their Miniſters: And as *Galen* ſpeaks of Phyſick for the body, it is alſo true of the Phyſick of the Soul: *In medicina nihil exiguum*, In Phyſick nothing is little; a ſmall errour there, may occaſion fearful miſchiefs: So a ſmall miſtake in ſouls concernments, may occaſion a ſouls everlaſting ruine.

2. To people: Is it of ſuch difficulty? O labour you to do your work in health, while time and ſtrength laſt, before the evil days come, &c. It is a ſerious Admonition of *Gregories* in his Book *De cura paſtorali*, *Salus corporis quando ad bene operandum accepta deſpicitur quanti ſit munere amiſſa ſentitur*: He that neglects the time of health for the doing of his great work, he ſhall feel the worth of it by the want of it. I beſeech you let me reaſon with you: Why will you run an hazard, when you may go a ſafe way? Conſider what woful ſtraits you will bring your ſelves to, if you do not ponder your ways, and fix your thoughts, and afflict your hearts, you kill your ſouls; if you do, perhaps your bodies, &c. what a dreadful *Dilemma* is this, &c. The Phyſitian chargeth you not to trouble your ſelves with ſad thoughts, leſt you overthrow your bodies: and the Miniſter, if he will be faithful, muſt charge you to trouble your ſelves, leſt you loſe your ſouls. O conſider now; now you may conſider, you have the uſe of reaſon, then reaſon may be loſt, &c. Now God will accept of you, then it may be he will reject you,

you, as *Prov.* 1. Now you are at leiſure to conſider, then *ſufficient unto the day will be the evil thereof.* And therefore be perſwaded to improve the time of health. It is the general cuſtom of ſick perſons to ſend for Miniſters to prepare them for the future life, when they deſpair of the enjoyment of this preſent life. A learned man wittily obſerved, that as they ſay, *Ubi deſinit Philoſophus, incipit Medicus*: So it may be ſaid, *Ubi deſinit Medicus, incipit Theologus*, Where the Phyſician ends, the Divine begins. Thus they begin to live at the end of their life: But you, if you be wiſe take this counſel (and O that my words might prevail with you) deſire to ſpeak with able and godly Miniſters in the time of your health: That, that is the acceptable time; Then may they give counſel freely, and you may follow their counſel throughly. That was the courſe of thoſe Converts, *Act.* 2. They did not tarry till their ſouls were ready to breathe out themſelves into eternity, but in the time of their health applied themſelves to *Peter*, &c. *Men and brethren, what ſhall we do?*

2. Make ſuch applications to your friends in health, as you muſt do in ſickneſs (if you mean to diſcharge your duty to God, or friendſhip to them) you will give them and your ſelves too great eaſe and advantage by it, &c. Remember what obligeth you to do it in ſickneſs, obligeth you alſo in health; you are your Brothers keepers, you have all, *curam animarum*, cure of ſouls. And as Miniſters are bound to this work *virtute officii*, by virtue of their office, ſo you are bound to it, *ex lege charitati.*: And ſurely if every one of you, are bound to deliver your neighbours Oxe or Aſs, when you ſee it falling into a pit; much more are you obliged to have compaſſion upon their ſouls, when they are going down to the pit, from which there is no redemption.

How

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How must we reprove, that we may not partake of other mens SINS?

1 Tim. 5. part. 22. v.

Neither be partaker of other mens sins, keep thy self pure.

THis Epistle is a Scripture *Directory* for Church Government. In this Chapter there are certain *general Rules*, or *Canons Apostolical*, which St. *Paul* enjoyns *Timothy* to observe;

1. About *Church-Widows*, how they must be *qualified*, to the 17th v.

2. About *Church-Elders*, how they must be *ordered*, to the end.

1. *About their Maintenance and Encouragement*, v. 17. 18.
2. *About their Credit and Reputation*, v. 19.
3. *About their Reproof and Correction*, v. 20.
4. *About their Admission and Ordination*, Text.

Lay *hands* suddenly on no man. Some understand this of the *hands*

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Salmeron. Gail. Chrys. Theoph. Thecd. Calvin. *of Absolution*, others of the *hands of Benediction*, others of the *hands of Confirmation*, but most and best, of the *hands of Ordination*, *i. e.* Ordain no man, admit no man into this Sacred and weighty Office and Function of the Ministry, suddenly. *Suddenly*, *i. e.* not before natural *capacity*, not without competent *ability*, not unless qualified with *piety*, *Paræus Estius.* *industry*, *gravity*. The danger follows, *Neither be partaker of other mens sins.*

1. Not of their sins who would *importune thee to Ordain* unworthy persons, *Consentiendo*, *by consenting.*

Estius. 2. Not of their sins who *do Ordain* unworthy persons, *Imitando*, *by imitating.*

Oecumenius. 3. Not of their sins who *are Ordained*, being unworthy persons: and that,

Estius in loc. 1. Not of their sins *before* Ordination, *Approbando*, *by approving of them.*

2. Not of their sins *after* Ordination, *Confirmando*, *by confirming them in them.* For, says the Apostle in the next verse but one, *Some mens sins are open before-hand, going before to judgment*, *i. e.* the *Crisis*, or Test, or Censure, or Judgment of the Church: *and some follow after.* This is the *Grammatical sense* and *Logical Analysis* of the words.

But beloved, I must take leave to handle the words in a greater latitude and extent: For certainly this Caution is not intended to *Ministers only*, neither is it to be confined to the *Case of Ordination*; but *Mat. 13 37.* as Christ said upon another occasion, *What I say unto you, I say unto all.* So here, what Saint *Paul* writes to *Timothy*, he speaks to all? a *private Christian* as well as a *Minister*; a *Church-member*, as well as a *Church-Elder*, must be sure to take heed, that he *be not partaker of other mens sins.* The Case of Conscience to be discussed this morning is this:

Case.

How must we reprove, and not partake of other mens sins.

Cant. 4. 2. And indeed this Case is complex and double, *it bears twins.*

1. About *Participation* of other mens sins.

2. About *Reproving* of other mens sins.

I must beg leave to project and manage my discourse *Sermon-wise*, and so commend to your Christian meditation this Truth and Doctrine. In the *explication* whereof, I shall handle the *former* Case, and in the *application* the *latter.*

Doctr. *It ought to be every mans care, not to partake of any mans sin*

Neither be partaker——

In

In the handling of which I shall endeavour to shew you,

1. *How a man may be guilty of other mens sins, or how many ways a man may be said to partake of other mens sins.*

2. *Why a Christian must be careful not to partake of other mens sins.*

3. *To apply it.*

1. *How a man may be said to partake of other mens sins:* To this I answer, There are *many ways* whereby we contract the guilt of others sins: *Lord*, says *David*, *who knows how oft he offends?* I will name some of them.

There are *eight ways* especially noted in Scripture, by all which a man is made *partaker*, and becomes *guilty* of the sins of others.

1. *By contrivance*, by plotting and contriving of sin, by provoking and soliciting others to sin; and this is in an high degree to be guilty of other mens sins. Thus *Jonabab* was guilty of *Ammons* Incest by his subtle *contriving* of that wickedness, by being a Pander to that Villany, 2 *Sam.* 13. 5.

When a man shall wittingly and willingly spread a snare in his brothers way, and either *drive* him in by *provocation*, or *decoy* him in by *allurement*, he makes himself a partaker of his sin, *E.g.* to provoke a man to Passion, to tempt a person to Drunkenness and uncleanness, to put a man upon Murder and blood-shed, to draw souls into Error, Heresie, Blasphemy, *&c.* this is to espouse and adopt the sin, and to make it a mans own.

You know the Story there, 2 *Sam.* 11. *Uriah* was slain with the edg of the sword, *David* was many miles off when *Uriah* was slain; he died in the battel, *Joab* put him in the front, and the *Ammonites* slew him: but now because *David* plotted and *contrived* all this, the Scripture tells us that *David* was the Murderer, 2 *Sam.* 12. 9. *Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, thou hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.* Though the *blade* was the *Ammonites*, and the *hilt* might be said to be *Joabs*; yet the *hand* was *Davids*, and the *deed* was *Davids*. The *Ammonites slew him*, but *David murdered him.* St. *Paul* tells us, he was a *blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious*, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13. Why Beloved, we do not read of any blasphemy that St. *Paul* uttered in all the Bible: Oh but, says he, *I compelled the Saints to blaspheme*, *Act.* 26. 11. There was his blasphemy in compelling others to blaspheme.

Beloved, to incite and provoke any to *sinful practices*, to seduce and solicite any to *loose doctrines and erronious opinions*, it is to be doubly

guilty of thoſe ſins, once by *infection*, and again by *inſtigation*.

Hence is that frequent expreſſion among the Fathers concerning *Arius* the Heretick, that look how many ſouls he had ſeduced to his hereſie and blaſphemy, ſo many ſeveral additions of torments he had in hell, as guilty of all their ſins: Oh man, who ever thou art that makeſt thy neighbour drunk, by *putting the bottle to his mouth*; that calleſt to thy brother, ſaying, *Caſt in thy lot amongſt us, and let us have one purſe*; that inticeſt the ſoul of the ſimple with a *Come, let us take our fill of loves, and ſolace our ſelves untill the morning*: I tell thee, thou art guilty of all their ſins, and mayeſt juſtly be puniſhed with all their plagues: for this, *Chriſtians*, is a moſt *Devilliſh* practice, to tempt and provoke others to wickedneſs. All ſins indeed are *devilliſh* ſins, *Per modum ſervitutis*; but ſome ſins are *devilliſh* ſins, *Per modum imaginis*. In all ſins, men bear the *Devils yoke*, 1 Joh. 3. 8. but in ſome ſins, men bear the *Devils image*.

Five Sins eſpecially the Scripture brands as *devilliſh* Sins, and this is the chief, 1. *Falſe accuſation*, 2 Tim. 3. 3. *Men ſhall be falſe accuſers*, *Devils*, ſays the *Greek*. 2. *Lying*, Joh. 8. 44. *you are of your father the Devil, for he is a liar and the father of it*. 3. *Pride*, 1 Tim. 3. 6. *not a novice, leſt puffed up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the Devil*. 4. *Perſecution*, Rev. 2. 10. *the Devil ſhall caſt ſome of you into priſon*, i. e. *devilliſh* men-preſecutors. 5. *Temptation*, as this is, *Get thee behind me Satan*, ſays *Chriſt* to *Peter*, when he tempted him, *Mat.* 16. 23. He that ſhall either *hinder* another of doing that *good* which is *commanded*, or ſhall *further* another to the doing of that *evil* which is *prohibited*, is juſtly chargeable with both their Sins.

2. *By compliance*, by conſenting and complying with Sin and Sinners, ſo a man makes himſelf partaker: though he has no *hand in't*, yet if he has a *heart in't*, though he does not *act it*, yet if he *likes it*, and *loves it*, and *approves it*, though he does not perſecute Gods Saints and Miniſters, yet if he ſaith, *Aha, aha! ſo would we have it*, 'tis enough to make him guilty before God.

Saul, he had no hand in St. *Stephens* death, he did not caſt one *ſtone* at him; but becauſe he looked on with approbation, and ſtood by with *conſent*, Act. 8. 1. *Saul was conſenting unto his death*, therefore was he eſteemed guilty of his blood and murder, and ſo himſelf confeſſes, when God had awakened him, and humbled him to repentance, *Act.* 22. 20. *When the blood of thy Martyr Stephen was ſhed, I was conſenting to his death*, and ſo charges himſelf as guilty of it.

God looks not upon the *outward man* ſo much as upon the *heart*, according

according to the *frame* and *inclination* of the heart, according as the *pulse* of the *heart* beats, so is every man in the account and esteem of God, if Sin has once storm'd the *Fort-Royal* of the *heart*, though it never appears in the *out-works*, the Garrison is lost: That which is upon the *stage* of the *heart* after *consent*, is as truly acted in the sight of God, as that which appears in the *outward man* by *commission*. Matth. 15. 19. *Out of the heart proceeds murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witnesses, blasphemies.* Why beloved, from the *hand* proceeds *Murders* and *Thefts*, Ephes. 4. 28. from the *eye* proceeds *Adulteries* and *Fornications*, 2 Pet. 2. 14. and from the *tongue* proceeds *false witnesses* and *blasphemies*, Psal. 120. 3. Oh but the *heart* is the *forge* of all.

You may murder a man with a *thought*, as they say the *Basilisk* will with a *look*, such a poysonous thing a wicked heart is; and let me tell you, 'tis the *heart*-murder, and the *heart*-adultery, and the *heart*-blasphemy, and the *heart*-iniquity, that God especially judges, according to that famous place, *Jer.* 17. 10. *I the Lord search the heart, to give to every man according to his ways, i.e.* according to what I see *acted* and *done* upon the *stage* of the *heart*, says God; he does not only judg the *actions*, but he judges the very *intentions*.

3. By *Connivance*, by a sinful *dissembling*, flattering and *winking* at others in their wickedness and sins, to men become guilty of others sins, Isa. 9. 16. *The leaders of this people cause them to erre*; 'tis in the *Hebrew*, The *Blessers* of this people cause them to erre. Beloved, the *blessers* of men in wickedness are the *leaders* of men in wickedness; he that shall wink at, and flatter men in Sins, when he knows in his conscience that they do wickedly, he makes himself *Captain* and *Master* of *Mis-rule* among them. And thus we are too prone to be partakers of *Magistrates sins*, and *Governours sins*, and *great mens sins*, *Patrons sins*, and *Landlords sins*. If the *Grandees* of the world profane the *Sabbath*, dishonour *God*, rant and swear, and scoff at *Religion*, out of a base cowardly spirit, or out of a carnal covetous heart, we flatter them and let them alone, it may be applaud them, as he said, *Tu fac hunc Dominum, te facit ille Deum*, do but make him a *Lord*, and he straight-way makes thee a *God*; as if we were not to distinguish between the *persons of men*, and the *vices of men*, or as if so be we more feared a *mortal man*, whose breath is in his nostrils, than we do the *immortal God*, who can frown us into hell in a moment: Oh this is to be deeply guilty of other mens Sins. See how sharply God by his Prophet taxes and reproves this *dawbing* in those wicked *upholsters*, that

מאשרי העם
Beatificantes populum.

sow pillows to every elbow, Ezek. 13. 17. and so forward. Read it at leisure.

I fear this has been the sin of former Times and Governments, God grant it may not be the Sin of present and future Ages, for men to connive at any that promote their own interests.

Alas, my brethren, methinks the interest of *Piety*, and the interest of *Conscience*, and the interest of the *eternal God*, Judg of quick and dead, should swallow up all the interests of the world. If *Nebuchadnezzar* himself should set up a golden Image, and would have it *worshipped*, I tell you 'tis not *treason* for *Shadrach*, *Meshech and Abednego* to say, *We are not careful oh King to answer thee in this matter*, Dan. 3. 16.

Besides, let not men deceive themselves, for such persons as can so easily betray the *interest of God*, will never be afraid, if opportunity serve, to oppose the *soveraignty of man*, whose authority he bears, and are not indeed *Hushai's*, but *Ziba's*, not *Davids friends*, but *Davids flatterers*.

4. By *sufferance*, by permitting the sins of others, so we become guilty, by *suffering* others to sin, whom we are *bound in duty*, and may be *able by authority* to hinder; and thus as in the former particular, we are guilty of *Magistrates sins*, in this particular Magistrates oft-times become guilty of *our sins*. Kings and Rulers, and subordinate Magistrates become oft-times deeply guilty of their peoples sins, namely, by *sufferance*, by *tolerating* Errors, and Heresies, and Blasphemies on the one hand, or by *suffering* wickedness and profaneness on the other.

That Ruler or Magistrate that shall suffer either *loose opinions* or *principles*, that are contrary to *sound doctrine*, to be broach'd, or *loose ways and customes*, that are contrary to the *power of godliness*, to be *observed*, and shall not use his authority to prevent and suppress them, he contracts to himself the *guilt*, and draws upon himself the *mischief* of all those Sins and Enormities: Just as he that licences a Book to the *Press*, if there be any faults of *ignorance*, or *error*, or *poysonous opinions*, they may be justly charged upon *him* and laid at his *door*, though he is not the *Author*, yet because he is the *Licenser*, though he is not the *Parent*, yet because he is the *midwife*. So if there be any *heresie* and *blasphemy*, *tolerated* in a place, if there be any *profaneness* and *ungodliness* *suffered* among a people, because it has the Magistrates *Imprimatur*, and he suffers it to *pass* the Country without *whipping*, therefore he's highly guilty.

Sabbath-breaking abounds, let it *pass*, says the *Maior* of a Town, *drunken-*

drunkenness abounds, let it *alone* says the *Justice* of peace; *profaneness* abounds, let it *go*, says the *Minister*. Sirs, if it should be *thus*, this were to bear the sins of a whole *Parish*, and a whole *County*, and a whole *Nation* upon a mans back at once. See that *Rev.* 2 to this purpose. Where you find the sins of the people charged upon the *Governours* for their *permission* and *toleration*, both sins of *Doctrine* and *Practise*. Of *Doctrine*, Rev. 2. 12, 14, 15. *Unto the Angel of the Church of Pergamus write. I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, so hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.* This is charged upon the *Angel*, the *Overseer* and *Governour* of the Church, he should have hindered it, and he did tolerate and permit it, and it was his Sin; and so of *Practice*, Rev. 2. 18, 20. *Unto the Angel of the Church in Thyatira, write, I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezabel, which calleth her self a Propheteſs to teach and seduce*, &c. To suffer *Jezabel* to teach in a Nation, is to suffer *painting*, and *wantonness*, and *uncleanness*: these were the Sins of *Jezabel*, and to *permit* them is to *partake* of them.

Object. 'But some may *object* and say, Why does *God* then *permit* Sin 'to be in the *world?* he might *hinder* it, and he might *prevent* it, if he 'would; there could be no wickedness acted under the Sun, but by Gods 'permission; the *Devil* could not tempt *Job*, nor *Satan* could not sift 'Peter without leave and commission from God, neither could any wicked 'man act his villany, and spit out his venom, without Gods *sufferance*. If 'permission of Sin be a *partaking* of Sin, how shall we vindicate God from 'the imputation of unrighteousness?

Ans. 1. This was *Marcion's* wicked and malicious cavil at Gods providence about the first Transgression; Why would not God, who foresaw the issue, *hinder Eve* and the *Devil* from *conference* and *communion* together, that so Sin might have been prevented, and the world been everlastingly happy? unless (saith he) God was either *envious* and *would not*, or *weak* and *could not* hinder it. To which *Tertullian* replys, *Because God was arbitrary and free in his gifts. Austin* answers, *Because it was his will. Prosper* and *Hilary* reply, *The cause may be unknown, it cannot be unjust.* All which is enough, *os obturare*, to *muzzle* that Heaven-daring *mouth* of Blasphemy. But afterward *Austin* answers, That *though sin be the worst thing in the world, yet the existence of sin is not ill*; as poyson would do no hurt if men would not meddle with it; but that satisfies not our case. Therefore,

2. *Though God hath authority, and is of ability to prevent and hinder*

the

the Commission of sin, yet he is not bound in duty so to do. God is under no tye and obligation, but his own purpose and pleasure, *Deus non tenetur Legibus*, God is a *Law to himself.* Herein lies the guilt and evil of mans permitting of sin, he is *bound in duty*, as well as *furnished with ability*, and authority to prevent it; and therefore his permitting of sin, is a partaking of sin, *Exod.* 22.18. *Thou shalt not suffer a Witch to live*; man is *bound* to hinder prophaneness and wickedness, if he can, but so is not God; though he is of infinite power and ability to restrain it, or to remove it, yet he is not *bound* in duty; and so it is no unrighteousness in God to suffer sin. *Sin is the transgression of the Law, but where there is no Law, there is no transgression.*

3. It is no unrighteousness in God to suffer sin, when he may hinder it, *because he can by his infinite Wisdom order it to his own glory*; he suffered *Pharaoh* to harden his heart, that he might be glorified on *Pharaoh*, Rom. 9. 17. *Pharaoh's* sin turned to *Gods glory*, as he makes all *penal evils* work together for *our good*; so he makes all *sinful evils* concurr to his *own glory.*

4. It is no unrighteousness in God to suffer sin, *because he can turn every mans sin to a greater benefit and advantage*; Gen. 50. 20. *You thought evil against me*, saith *Joseph* to his Brethren, *but God meant it unto good?* He can bring good out of evil, and light out of darkness. God suffers Toads and Serpents to live, because they are useful, they suck the noxious and hurtful gusts from herbs and flowers, and so make them wholsome for mans use: So God permits sin in the world, because he knows how to make it useful; He can make an *Antidote* of the *Vipers flesh.* He did by an excellent and rare *Chymistry* extract the *greatest Mercy* from the *greatest Mischief*; the *greatest Good* from the *greatest Evil*; the *Salvation of Mankind* from the *Crucifixion of Jesus Christ.*

5. *By influence* of bad *Example*; by setting loose and bad Examples for others to imitate: So men are guilty of others sins, as namely, when Children sin by the Examples of their Parents, those very Parents are guilty of their Childrens sin. So we have some *Families* that inherit the *lusts*, as well as *the lands* of their *Ancestours*; *Parents* swear and curse, and so do *Children*; *Parents* are Drunkards, and so are *Children*; *Parents* are unclean, and so are *Children*; as they make them *rich* by their *Livings*, so they make them *wretched* and *debauche* by their *lives*; this is to make themselves partakers of all their sins. So when *people* sin by the looseness and licentiousness of their *Minister*; that *Minister* is guilty of those very sins that the *people* so commit; which

which made *Auſtin*, though a very holy man, ſo exceeding jealous of himſelf in this caſe, that that was his conſtant prayer, *Libera me, Domine, à peccatis meis alienis*, *Lord*, ſaith he, *deliver me from mine other mens ſins*; thoſe ſins that others have committed through my careleſneſs and incogitancy.

And indeed *Examples* are more cogent and influential a great deal than *precepts*. The Adulteries of *Jupiter*, and other Pagan Gods did mightily draw the people to imitate their wantonneſs; and *Auguſtine* gives the reaſon, *Magis intuebantur quid fecerat* Jupiter, *quàm quid docuit* Plato; They more minded what *Jupiter did*, then what *Plato taught*.

Jeroboam the ſon of *Nebat* is ſaid to make *Iſrael* to ſin, that's his brand. How did he *make Iſrael* to ſin? why by his *Law* he *commanded* them to ſin, but by his practice and *Example* he *made* them to ſin; He ſet up *Calves* in *Dan* and *Bethel*, and whole *herds* of people ran a *lowing* after them. So it is ſaid of Saint *Peter*, that he *compelled* the Gentiles to *Judaize*, *Galat.* 2. 14. *Why compelleſt thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?* How did Saint *Peter* compell the Gentiles to Judaize? Not by any thing he *preacht* to them, ſaith *Hierome*, but by his *Example*, *non docentis imperio, ſed converſantis exemplo*. A ſtone you know thrown into the water, makes it ſelf but *one* circle, aye but that one perhaps begets a *ſcore*, or an *hundred*: So it is here, he that ſets an evil Example, ſins not alone, he draws *hundreds* it may be into ſin after him. He is like a man that ſets his own houſe on fire, it burns many of his neighbours, and he is to be anſwerable for all the ruins.

Epiſtola Hieronymi intra opera Auguſtini, Epiſt. 11.

6. *By inference* from a bad Example, or by *imitation*, ſo a man is guilty of another mans ſin, not only by *pattern*, in *ſetting* bad Examples, but alſo by *practiſe*, in following bad Examples; and thus, that man that will be drunk, becauſe another was drunk, or that breaks the Sabbath, becauſe others do the like, he is not onely guilty of his own particular ſin, but he is guilty alſo of their ſins whom he imitates and follows, and the reaſon is, *becauſe bad* Examples *are not Land-marks for us to go by, but they are Sea-marks for us to avoid.* Hence you ſhall find in Scripture mention made of *Children by imitation* as well as by *nature*, and *people* by *imitation*, as well as by *nation*, and *Kings by imitation*, as well as by *ſucceſſion*. I'le give you an *inſtance* of all theſe. Look into that *Judges* 18. 30. *The children of* Dan *ſet up the graven image, and Jonathan the ſon of Gerſhom, the ſon of Manaſſeh, he and his ſons were Prieſts to the Tribe of Dan.* Here *Jonathan*

an *Idol-Priest*, is called the son of *Gershom*, the son of *Manasseh*, *i.e.* the Grand-child of *Manasseh*. Now it is clear in Scripture, that *Gershom* was the son of *Moses*, and not of *Manasseh*, Exodus 2.22. & 18.3. 1 *Chron.* 23.15. And so *Jonathan* must be the Grand-child of *Moses*, and not of *Manasseh*. But the *Jews* and learned *Criticks* tell us, that he is called the Grand-child of *Manasseh* for a double reason. 1. Because the Scripture consulting the honour of *Moses*, did conceal his pedigree as to *Moses*, for it had been a disgrace to *Moses*, to have had upon record an *Idol-Priest* in his linage; and 2. Which is to my purpose, he is called the Grand-child of *Manasseh*, and that by προλήψις, and *anticipation*, because he followed him in his *Idolatry*, he was no whit like *Moses*, but rather imitated *Manasseh*, and so he is called his Grand-child.

For the other instance, see *Isa.* 1.10. *Hear the word of the Lord ye Rulers of Sodom, and give ear unto the Law of our God ye people of Gomorrah.* Why beloved, these that the Prophet speaks to, they were the people of *Judah*, and the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem*. Why does the Prophet call them the people of *Gomorrah?* even for this reason, they did *imitate* those filthy *Sodomites* and *Gomorrhites* in wickedness and wantonness, and looseness, and so became *guilty* of their *sins*, and *worthy* of their *names*.

The last instance you have in 2 *Chron.* 28.19. *The Lord brought Judah low, because of Ahaz King of Israel.* *Ahaz*, all know, was King of *Judah*, and not King of *Israel*; but he is called King of *Israel*, because he *imitated* the wicked and Idolatrous Kings of *Israel*, he was not so by *succession*, but he was so by *imitation*.

Hence it is that God is said to *visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children*, because they make themselves guilty by *imitation*; and this may be a Key to unlock that place of the Apostle, 2 *Tim.* 3.13. *Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.* *Deceivers are worse*, but the *Deceived* are *worse and worse*; if they see a bad Example, and will not avoid it, but copy it, they are worse than worse. *The Deceiver* is guilty of the *deceived's sin* by *instigation*, and the *deceived* is guilty of the *deceivers sin* by *imitation*.

And this is the woful, intricate perplexed *Labyrinth*, into which sin doth precipitate careless and ungodly Sinners. If thou committest that sin, which none *before* committed *but thee*, thou art guilty of all the sins of *future Generations* by thy *Example*, as *Adam* was in the *World*, and *Jeroboam* in *Israel*. And if thou committest any Sin, because *others* have committed it *before thee*, thou art guilty of all the sins of *former* Gene-

Generations, by thy *imitation*, and so Sin never goes alone; *a single sin is* as great a *solœcism* in *Divinity*, as *a single thank* is in *Grammar* and *Morality*; and that you may know *Christians*, I do not speak *without Book* in so saying, witness that dreadful place, *Mat.* 23.34,35,36. *Wherefore behold I send unto you Prophets and wise men, and Scribes, and some of them ye shall kill and crucifie, and some of them ye shall scourge in your Synagogues, and persecute from City to City.* Mark, *that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the Earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias the Son of Barachias, whom ye slew*, though slain in *Jehoash* reign, almost *nine hundred* years before, yet *ye slew between the Temple and the Altar. Verily I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this Generation*: And why? Because they sinned *after the similitude of their Fathers transgression.* Oh what matter of humiliation is this to every soul that continues in any known sin.

7. *By countenance*; by delightful society and *company* with wicked men to *countenance* them, so we become partakers of their sins, 1 *Cor.* 5. 11. compared with 13. *But now I have written to you not to keep company. If any man that is called a Brother be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with such a one no not to eat; Therefore put away from among your selves that wicked person.* As you would *avoid* the *sin*, *avoid* the *sinner*: *Eating* does denote *intimate* fellowship and familiarity, and we cannot be *intimate* with such without contracting their guilt to our own souls. 'Tis true indeed, *all commerce* with such is not forbidden, for then, as the Apostle sayes, *we must go out of the world*, verse 10. But *intimate* society is upon this account. And therefore the *Apostle*, or at least the *Translatour* does here seem *Critically* to distinguish between *companying*, and *keeping companying*, ver. 9. compared with 11. *I wrote to you in an Epistle not to company with Fornicators; but now I write to you not to keep company*; *Company* we may, yea, we cannot avoid it, but keep *company* we must not with wicked men. As elsewhere the Holy Ghost distinguishes between *sinning*, and *committing sin*; *He that is born of God doth not commit sin*, saith Saint *John*. The holiest man on this side Heaven cannot but *sin*, saith the same *Apostle*, aye but *he that is born of God does not commit sin*; *sin* he does, but *commit sin* he doth not; *i.e.* he doth not delight in it, he doth not use it, he doth not make it his practice. *So here.*

We read in Scripture where wicked men have often fared better for the godly, as *Laban* for *Jacob*, and *Potiphar* for *Joseph*, and *Ahab* for *Je-*

Joshaphat, &c. but we never read that godly men fared better for the company of the wicked, but rather *worse*, Psal. 119. 115. *Depart from me ye evil doers, for I will keep the Commandments of my God*; it is a very hard matter *to keep wicked company*, and *to keep the Commandments of God* together.

The *Lacedemonians* would never suffer a stranger to be with them above three days, for fear of *infection* and corruption with their evil manners. And verily those that are strangers to God and godliness, should be as little as may be our companions.

8. By *Maintenance*, by upholding and encouraging men in their sins, though thou never committest them thy self, yet thou art guilty, 2 *Joh.* 11. *He that biddeth him God-speed, is partaker of his evil Deeds.* Though thou doest not *commit it*, yet if thou doest *applaud it*, and *rejoyce in it*, and say it is well done, thou art a partner; if thou art not the *Mother of it*, yet thou art the *Nurse of it*; if thou art not the *Father of it*, yet thou art the *Guardian of it*, and God will lay the *brat* at thy door, as sure as if thou hadst *begot* it.

Thus I have done with the first thing, *how we become guilty, or how many wayes partakers of other mens sins:* There are many more might be named, as *by bindring good, by excusing evil, by administring occasion, by not reproving not mourning, not reclaiming, &c.* But these and many more that practical Authors handle, they are but *underling-sprigs* from the great branches that I have opened.

2. *Why a Christian must be careful to avoid, and not to partake of other mens sins?* The *reasons* of the *Doctrine.*

Answ. Out of a *Three-fold* principle.

1. Out of a principle of *Charity* to our *Brethren.*
2. Out of a principle of *Pity* to our *selves.*
3. Out of a principle of *Piety* to *God.*

1. *Out of charity to our Brethren*, that we be not means and instruments to promote their ruine and destruction: For, to partake of other mens Sins, though it does more *burthen us*, yet it does never a whit *ease them*, but does rather *harden them*, and confirm them in their practises, for company in sin makes men act it with the greater confidence. Now this is to do the *Devils* part in the habit of a *friend.* Sirs, we must be charitable, *Charity* is the Golden Rule, *charity* is the bond of perfection; now if it be a piece of charity to help up our Brothers *Oxe* or *Ass* when he is fallen into a Ditch, *Exod.* 23. 4. Sure 'tis more charity to do as much for his *soul*, *Jude* 23. *Others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire.* Sin is the deep Ditch of the Soul, and Sin is the Hell-*fire* of the

the soul, as it were, here should be lifting and plucking indeed.

The neglect of this duty of keeping one another from sin, the Scripture calls an *hating of our Brother*, Lev. 19. 17. *Thou shalt not hate thy Brother in thine heart, Thou shalt not suffer sin upon him.* I observe in company, that if many persons sit together by a fire, and a Spark flye upon any one of them, every one is ready to shake it off and beat it off; and why should not we be as friendly and charitable to mens souls, when Sin, which is as Hell flakes, lies *smothering* in their *consciences*, or *burning* upon *their souls?*

2. *Out of pity to our selves*, that we may keep our selves from the *blood* of other mens *souls*, and secure our selves from the *judgments* of other mens *sins*. For the former, says St. *Paul*, Act. 20. 26, 27. *I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God*: Had the Apostle *connived at, or consented* to their sins, God would have made inquisition for the blood of their souls at his hands. For the latter, says *Jacob*, Gen. 49. 5, 6, 7. *Simeon and Levi are Brethren, instruments of cruelty are in their habitations. Oh my Soul, come not into their secrets; unto their assembly, mine honour be not thou united.* Why? Oh, *I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.* He would not have a hand in their *sinful union*, because he would not have a *share* in their *dreadful division*; they were *united in sin*, and they must be *divided in punishment.*

3. *Out of piety towards God*; God forbids it, *Ephes.* 5. 7. Be not partakers with them, and God forbid that we should do it! Nay, God abhors it and condemns it, *Psalm* 50. 18, 21. *When thou sawest a Thief, thou consentedst with him, and hast been partakers with the Adulterers*, &c. *These things hast thou done, but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thee.* This Sin is a breach of all the Law at once, being against the rule of Charity. He that hath his own sins alone, doth only *commit* them, but he that takes *other mens sin*, doth highly *approve* them; and this greatly dishonours God; it is worse *partaking* of sin, than *committing* of sin, *Rom.* 1. 32. *They do not only do the same*, saith the Apostle, *but have pleasure in them that do them*, that's worse. Wherefore *Zelophehads* daughters pleaded in mitigation of their Fathers offence, that *he died in his own sin*, he was not partner with *Korah, but died in his own sin*: It is worse to be a *partner*, than to be an *Actor*, *Numb.* 27. 3.

3. *Application.*

1. *Information*: Is there such a thing, as *partaking of other mens sins* after this manner? 1. *Hence*

1. *Hence you may be informed of the Equity and Juſtice of Gods proceeding in puniſhment*: You oft-times ſee God puniſhing one mans Sin upon another, or at leaſt hear of it, and you think it ſtrange: why this *Oedipus* will read you the Riddle. This *Clue* will conduct you through the *labyrinth*, They have been ſome way or other *partakers* of thoſe Sins, either by *contrivance*, or by *compliance*, or by *connivance*, &c. one way or other, elſe God would never puniſh them, if they have not been *Actors*, they have been *Abettors*: *Shall not the Judg of all the world do right?* God puniſhes *Children* for the Sins of their *Parents*, *Exod.* 34. 7. Aye but thoſe *Children* have been κοινωνοὶ, *partakers* certainly, by *approbation*, it may be by *imitation*: God puniſhes *ſervants* for the Sins of their *maſters*, *Gen.* 12. 17. But ſure the *ſervants* were κοινωνοὶ, *partakers* by *conſenting*, it may be by *executing*: God puniſhes *Wives* for the Sins of their *Husbands*, *Gen.* 20. 18. but thoſe *Wives* were κοινωνοὶ, *partakers* ſtill by *admitting*, by *enduring*: God puniſhes *Miniſters* for the Sins of the *people*, *Ezek.* 33. 8. But then thoſe *Miniſters* are κοινωνοὶ, *partakers* ſure enough, by *not inſtructing*, by *not reproving*; ſtill *the* Juſtice of God is vindicated.

2. Hence be informed *what piety, and ſtrictneſs, and watchfulneſs, is more eſpecially required of thoſe that have the care of others*, *e.g.* Kings and Parents, and Maſters, and Magiſtrates, and Miniſters; they ſhould be *exemplary in godlineſs*: They have *curam animarum*, and therefore they ſhould have *curam animæ*; they have care of *other mens* ſouls, and therefore they ſhould look well to their *own*. The want of this was her *crime* and *complaint*, *Cant.* 1. 6. *They made me the Keeper of the Vineyards, but mine own Vineyard have I not kept.* Oh thoſe that are Keepers of Vineyards had need to have ſpecial care of their own Vineyard.

3. Hence take an account *why the wicked of the world do ſo hate the godly, and reproach and revile them*; it is this, They will not be *partakers of their ſins*, they will not *commit them*, neither will they *connive at them*; and this is the reaſon why the world hates them: *Ahab* hates *Michaiah*, and himſelf gives the reaſon, becauſe he *reproved him*, 1 *King.* 22. 8. *I hate him, he never ſpeaks well of me.* *Herod* hates *John Baptiſt* becauſe he *reproves him.* No wonder that *miniſters* of all kind of men in the world are moſt *hated*; the caſe is plain, becauſe they are *reprovers*. *Godly miniſters* are wicked mens *reprovers*, and *wicked men* are Godly Miniſters *reproachers*, 1 *Pet.* 4. 4. *They think it ſtrange you run not with them to the ſame exceſs of Riot, ſpeaking evil of you.*

4. Here

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4. Here is *matter of reproof and humiliation this day for our want of watchfulness in this kind.* Oh which of us can say, that we are free from the guilt of other mens sins. Every man may cast this *bur* of *reproof* and *lamentation* at his own Conscience, and there let it stick. *Parents* every one, *ah my childrens sins*; *Masters, ah my servants sins*; *Ministers, ah my peoples sins*; *Rulers, ah my subjects sins.* Oh let us deeply mourn for want of *relative holiness*, and more frequently and fervently pray that prayer, *Lord forgive me my other mens sins.*

2. The *second Use* is of *Exhortation* and *Caution* together. Is it so, That it ought to be *every mans care*, not to partake of any *mans sin?*

Oh Christians! let me intreat you then to be very mindful of this Duty; be perswaded, beloved, and the Lord perswade you to be tenderly careful and watchful, *that you do not partake of other mens sins.* These are infectious times and places that we live in, and multitudes there are that catch diseases and distempers from others; but let me tell you Christians, that *bodily diseases* are not half so catching as *sins* is; Sin is an infectious, contagious, pestilential plague, that spreads mightily in the world: Oh take heed, take heed that the guilt of other mens Sins do not one day lie upon your Conscience, and be put upon your account.

Let me inforce this counsel in the words of our Apostle here, and they are very weighty and *Emphatical.*

Verse 21. *I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Elect Angels, that thou observe these things, without preferring one before another*; and amongst the rest this is one, *That thou be not partaker of other mens sins.* Give me leave to prosecute this in these three particulars.

1. *By laying down some Arguments to press this Caution and Exhortation.*

2. *By pointing at what sins especially you must not partake of.*

3. *By shewing you how you may so manage the business, and order the matter, as not to be partakers of other mens sins.* What are the *Antidotes* against this *infection.*

1. To lay down the *Arguments.*

1. Consider, *you have sins enough of your own*, you have no reason to partake of other mens; it is cruel to *add affliction to your bonds. Jesus Christ* had no sins of his own, and therefore he could, and did bear ours; he did take all mens sins, though he did not *partake* of any mans sins, all were his by *imputation*, *Isa.* 53. 6. *He hath laid upon him the iniquities of us all*, but none were his by *perpetration* and *participation*

ticipation. It is not ſo with us, alas! We have ſins enough of our own; Man, Woman, thine own *pride* will damn thee, if thou doſt not repent; and thine own *hypocriſie*, and *formality*, and *worldlineſs*, and *hardneſs* of heart; thou haſt no need to take the ſins of others; ſaid the Daughter of *Zelophehad*, our *Father died in his own ſin*, Numb. 27.3. aye, that is enough to *Kill* a man, and *Damn* a man, *his own ſin.*

2 Conſider. *It is a moſt monſtrous ſin, it is a moſt Dreadful ſin to partake of other mens ſins.* The Apoſtle ſpeaks of *committing iniquity with greedineſs*, Epheſ. 4.19. Sirs, there is no ſuch greedy ſinning as this, for a man to lick up, and ſwallow down, and devour other mens ſins. *Naturaliſts* tell us, that *Serpens Serpentem devorans fit Draco*, If a Serpent ſwallow down another Serpent, it becomes a Dragon. Oh *Chriſtians!* this ſin of devouring other mens ſins, is a *Dragon-ſin*, a *Monſtrous-ſin*, a *Dreadful ſin*, a *Deviliſh-ſin*, and therefore take heed of it.

3. Conſider, *If you partake of other mens ſins, you ſhall certainly partake of other mens plagues*, Rev. 18. 4. *Come out of her my people*, ſays God, namely, from *Babylon, that you be not partakers of her ſins, that ſo ye receive not of her plagues.* See Prov. 13. 20. *A companion of fools ſhall be deſtroyed*; not onely *fools* ſhall be deſtroyed, but a *companion* of fools ſhall be deſtroyed: If you *ſin* with them, you ſhall *ſuffer* with them, and you ſhall *ſuffer more* becauſe of them. Read that, *Luk.* 16. 27, 28. *And the rich man ſaid, I pray thee Father Abraham, that thou wouldeſt ſend Lazarus to my Fathers houſe, for I have five Brethren, that he may teſtifie unto them, leſt they alſo come into this place of Torment.* Why would not he have his Brethren to come to hell to him? Divines determine, not out of any *love to their ſouls*, there is not that charity to be ſuppoſed in hell. Oh, but becauſe the ſight of them, *and company of them, would increaſe his Torment.* This will be the ſchreeking and howling in hell among damned ſouls one to another; oh woe-worth *the* day that ever I ſaw *thy* face, oh that ever I ſaw *thy* face! thou haſt brought *me* hither, and thou haſt brought *me* hither; and ſo they will torment one another to all eternity.

Loquitur Apoſtolus de peccatis gravioribus ſiſqs maximè quæ publicum offendiculum pariunt. Eſtius in loc.

2. *What ſins we muſt eſpecially take heed of partaking of?*

Anſ. Of all ſin whatſoever, 1 Theſ. 5. 22. *Abſtain from all appearance of evil*; but eſpecially of *three ſorts of ſins*, which may be called *Epidemical* Plagues.

1. Church-ſins, 2. National-ſins, 3. Family-ſins. But I ſhall ſpeak nothing of the firſt, but little of the ſecond, and moſt to the third.

Among

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Among National sins, *especially* take heed of *Prophaneness*; this is obvious, this is an universal spreading plague, that is like to infect the whole Kingdom, if God does not in mercy prevent it. There is a deluge of prosaneness breaking in on every side, Swearing, Drinking, Whoring, Sabbath-breaking, Scoffing, and Mocking at Religion, all the Countries ring again. Men are now grown bold, and audacious, and incorrigible in their wickedness, that like a *Titan-brood* they even threaten Heaven it self with an over-daring impudence, as if they would storm the Palace of *Jehovah*, and pluck him out of his Throne. Oh take heed of partaking here!

2. *Family-sins*, we must have a care of partaking here, and so much the more watchful must we be, in that Family-sins of all sins are most catching and infectious; As it is with bodily diseases, if one be sick in an house, they of the blood, and kin, and family, are likest to catch the distemper, because of their frequent and intimate converse especially: So it is here, if there be any predominant lust lurking in a Family, all are apt to be infected with it, if they are not marvellous circumspect and watchful.

And therefore Parents, and Masters, and Governours of Families had need to be reformers both of themselves, and all under their charge; for besides, that this is the most compendious and safest way to State-Reformation, and Church-Reformation. Every Family being a kind of a little Kingdom of it self, and a little Church of it self, wherein the Master is both King, Priest, and Prophet; besides this, there is the sound of this Argument, and reason to allarum them (*viz.*) as they desire to have their souls and consciences free from the guilt of other mens sins.

Plato seeing a child do mischief in the streets, went forthwith and corrected his Father for it; that Father that does not correct his child when he does amiss, is justly corrected for his faults, and it is the pattern of Gods judicial proceedings, as he visits the iniquities of the Fathers upon the Children, who *imitate them*: So he visites the iniquities of the Children upon the Fathers, who *countenance and indulge them*. A *Jacob* was countable to *Laban* for the whole flock, not a Sheep or a Lamb lost or torn, but it was required at his hands, *Gen.* 31. 39. Thus must Family-Governours be accountable to God for every Lamb in the fold, for every Child in the Family, for every servant in the house, *Luke* 16. 2. Says God to him, *Give an account of thy Stewardship, thou mayest be no longer Steward:* So will God one day cry aloud in thine ears, *Quintili vare, redde legiones*, Husband,

Father, Master, Wife, give an account of thy Husbandship, and give an account of thy Fathership, give an account of thy Mastership, give an account of thy Wifeship, *&c.* This made *Joshuah* undertake for his *house*, as well as for *himself*, *Josh.* 24 15. And this made *David* careful of his *house*, as well as his *heart*, Psal. 101. 2. *I will walk within mine house, with a perfect heart*; not only with a perfect heart, but in his house with a perfect heart, so as to reform his *family*, that that may be the *Church of God*, Col. 4. 15. as well as to reform himself, that he may be the *Temple of God*, 1 Cor. 3. 17.

Philem. 2. Col. 4. 15. 1 Cor. 6. 19.

Ah how many Families are there whose houses are not the *Church of God*, but the *Synagogue of Satan* rather; God is not in all their thoughts, nor God is not in all their mouths, except it be in swearing and curling, and blaspheming. Their *Bellies are their god*, and their lusts are their Lord. It is said of *Noahs Ark*, that it was pitcht within and without, *Gen.* 6. 14. Such (says one) is the condition of many a mans house, it is a *Noahs Ark*, it is pitcht within and without, nothing but the pollutions and defilements of sin in every room, and passage, and corner. *Idleness* stands at the door; *Unconscionableness* walks in the shop; *Covetousness* lurks in the counting-house; *Luxury* sits at the Table; *Pride* looks out at the window; *Wantonness* lodges in the bed; all pitchy and filthy both within and without.

And therefore Christians for the Lords sake, *out* with all this rubbish, if it should be found in your Families; How do you in *London* here delight to have your houses clean, and hereupon sweep them, and wash them, and rub them; oh that you would be as careful to cleanse your *Families* from sin, as you are to cleanse your *houses* from *dirt*; how soon would this great City become *an Habitation of Righteousness, and a Mountain of Holiness*; how would this Family-Reformation prevent the guilt of Family-sins, and keep out Family-distractions, and secure from Family-desolation. Therefore Sirs, set up Family-watchfulness, and Family-correction; let every house be an house of correction of it self; and set about Family-reading, and Family-conference, and Family-repetition, and especially Family-prayer. That all your houses may be like Gods house; you know his is called *an house of Prayer*, Isa. 56. 7. *Mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people*: So should yours, they should be houses of prayer all of them; if they be not, let me tell you, they are no better then Dens of Thieves. Saith Christ, *Matth.* 21. 13. *My house shall be called an house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves.* There is no *Medium* betwixt these two; if your houses be not *houses of Prayer*, they are certainly *dens of Thieves*; if you do.

do not *pray* to God for your mercies, before you receive them, and *praise* God for your mercies when you enjoy them, you do but *rob* God of his mercies; they are not *given*, but *thrown*, and *snatcht* indeed, rather than *received*.

3. Now, and in the last place, we come to the *Antidotes*, *How we must so carry it, and order the business, as not to partake of other mens sins.*

Antidote 1. *Exercise an holy jealousie over others* (I am jealous over you, saith *Paul*) especially thy Relations; and this is the way to deliver thy soul from their sins. *Job* sacrificing for his children, said, *It may be* they have sinned, *Job* 1.5.

Antid. 2. *Watch against the sins of others*, have your eyes about you: take heed of contriving, complying, winking at them, if it be in your power, take heed of suffering them. See *Davids* paroxism of zeal in this case, *Psal.* 101.2, &c.

This is the direction in the Text, which must not be omitted; Keep thy self pure, take heed of infectious places, and infectious practices, and infectious company.

Antid. 3. *Pray against them*, pray against profaneness, pray *Augustines* prayer, *Lord deliver me from other mens sins.*

Antid. 4. *Mourn for them*; mourn for the sins of the Nation, and mourn for the sins of thy Relations! for the sins of thy Brethren in their obstinacy, that they will not be reformed: Christ came to sinful *Jerusalem* with weeping eyes, and with a mourning heart, oh *Jerusalem*! *David* mourned for the wickedness of the times that he saw, *Psal.* 119. 136. Many walk, says *Paul*, of whom I tell you weeping. Thus did Gods people of old free themselves from National sins, and particular mens sins. When they could not be reformers they turned mourners, *Jer.* 13.17. And see how prevalent this is with God, these mourners are the only people to deliver a Nation, or at least to deliver themselves from the sin and plagues of a Nation, when God makes an overflowing scourge to pass through, *Ezek.* 9.4. On the other side, not mourning for the sins of others, makes us adopt, and espouse the sins of others. *Dan.* 5.22.

Antid. 5. *Reprove them.* Ezek. 3. 17, 18, 19. If we would not partake of the sins of others, we must reprove the sins of others, *Lev.* 19. *Ezek.* 33. 7, 8, 9. So the Apostle saith expresly, *Ephes.* 5. 11. intimating that you do certainly approve them, if you do not reprove them. Reprove Heresie, Blasphemy, Drunkenness, Oaths, Sabbath-breaking, Uncleanness, and every sin you hear or see committed.

The Raviſht Virgin under the Law, *Deut.* 22. 25. was to cry out; in this caſe God takes ſilence for conſent. As there is a holy ſilence to Gods Correction, *Aaron* held his peace; ſo there is a ſinful ſilence under mans corruption, *Eli* held his peace alſo; *Aarons* ſilence was a good ſilence, but *Ely's* ſilence was a naughty ſilence; we muſt be ſilent under Gods correction, but we muſt not be ſilent under mans corruption, *Leviticus* 5. 1. Therefore ſaith Saint *Paul*, Reprove them; the beſt way to avoid fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of darkneſs, and to free a mans ſoul from the guilt of other mens ſins, is to reprove them, that is the Antidote againſt this infection. Thus the *Epheſians* practiſed as Saint *Paul* preacht. Saint *Paul* does not more adviſe them to this duty, than Saint *John* does commend them for this duty. Says the Holy Ghoſt there in *Apoc.* 2. 1, 2, 3. compared together——haſt born, and yet haſt not born——Gods Correction——mans corruption. *I* know thy patience, and how thou canſt not ——it is no breach of patience to be impatient againſt ſin, and ſinners. But now beloved, becauſe this ſword of Reproof is a very dangerous weapon, if it be not rightly handled, an edg-tool that we muſt be marvellouſly chary how we meddle with; There is required therefore a great deal of skill, and prudence, and wiſdom, and watchfulneſs, to a right and ſucceſsful managing of this duty, *Eccleſiaſt.* 12. 11. He that would faſten this nail of Reproof, in the conſcience of his offending Brother, had need be a very wiſe man. Yea, as I remember, *Iſiod. Peluſ.* τὸ μὲν ὀνειδίζειν ῥᾴδιον. Every one can find fault, and reprove another for the ſame, but to do it diſcreetly and ſeaſonably, and ſucceſsfully requires a great deal of wiſdom; and to this end I ſhall give you theſe Rules. Reproof is double.

1. Miniſterial, and by way of Authority, and Fraternal, by way of Charity.

And here we come to the ſecond caſe, viz. *Reproof* 1. *He that reproves another, muſt be very careful that himſelf be faultleſs and blameleſs, as much as may be*; otherwiſe he is not acting his Charity, but bewraying his Hypocriſie. Thou that teacheſt another ——*Rom.* 2. 21, 22. This is Hypocriſie, ſaith Chriſt, *Mat.* 7. 3, 4, 5.——And here there are two things coucht in this;

1. *A man muſt be faultleſs in reference to ſin in general, as much as may be, that will reprove another.* The ſnuffers of the Sanctuary under the Law were of pure gold, and it behoves that man, that will be a ſnuffer in Gods houſe, to correct others, to amend others, and reprove others; to be very upright and circumſpect in all things, and then he may

may admoniſh with the greater advantage, Authority, Efficacy. Let the *Righteous* ſmite me, ſaith *David*, &c. Pſal. 141. 5. A man of a ſtrict and ſevere life, and religious and righteous converſation, carries a kind of a Majeſty and Authority along with him, at which the guilty conſciences of guilty ſinners cannot but recoil, as *Herod* did to *John Baptiſt*, Mar. 6. 20. ——Though *John* had reproved him, and touched him to the quick, *v.* 18. And then

2. *A man muſt be blameleſs in reference to that ſin he reproves eſpecially*; elſe, in healing his Brother, he doth but ſtab himſelf; if thou reproveſt Pride in others, and art proud thy ſelf; *Covetouſneſs*, and art covetous thy ſelf; *Drunkenneſs*, and art a drunkard thy ſelf, thou doſt but like *David* in *Nathans* Parable, pronounce the ſentence of thine own condemnation, *Rom.* 2. 1. But here I muſt enter one Caution, None is exempted from this duty for unfitneſs; no, this thou oughteſt to have done, and not to have left the other undone.

2. ——*As he muſt take heed that himſelf be faultleſs, ſo he muſt be ſure that his Brother be faulty*; For otherwiſe it is not to reprove him, but to reproach him; and ſo inſtead of doing a Chriſtian duty, a man commits a devilish ſin; he becomes an accuſer of the Brethren, inſtead of a Reprover of the Brethren, *Gal.* 2. 11. And here are likewiſe two things conſiderable:

1. It muſt be a truth that thou reproveſt him for.

2. It muſt be a ſin that thou reproveſt him for.

1. It muſt not be a conjecture, or imagination, or jealouſie, or rumor, or hear-ſay that's ground ſufficient for Reproof: for all theſe may be falſe, and the Rule of Charity is, *quiſque præſumitur eſſe bonus niſi conſtat de malo*——but verily, the guiſe of the world is far otherwiſe; we deal with our Brethren as the perſecuting Pagans did with the Primitive Chriſtians, put them into Lions skins, and into Bear skins, and then bait them, and tear them to pieces. Alas! the poor Chriſtians were harmleſs, meek Lambs, but they diſguiſed them, and ſo abuſed them. Thus 'tis now, Chriſtians are apt and ready to put their poor Brethren into I know not what kind of monſtrous ugly ſhapes, of their own imagining, and deviſing, or elſe of other mens traducing and reporting, and without more ado, they fall foul upon them; This is not to imitate our Saviour, *Iſa.* 11. 2, 3, 4.——Not from rumors——but with righteouſneſs and equity; as God ſaid in deſtroying of *Sodom*, ſo ſhould we ſay in reproving our Brethren, *Gen.* 18. 21. *I will go down and ſee.*

2. It muſt be a breach of ſome command Affirmative or Negative, directly, or reductively; either the omiſſion of that which is good,

or

or the commiſſion of that which is evil; ——— we muſt be *Cato*'s, ——not *Momus*'s.—As the Phariſees, to Chriſt, *Mat.* 19. 3. So here, is it lawful to reprove a man for every cauſe? no, the Diſciples were quite out in reproving the children for coming to Chriſt in this chapter when it was not their ſin, but their duty, *ver.* 13, 14. Quakers make a ſtir about Cuffs, and Bands, and Ribbons, and Laces, and ſuch like minute trifles of Phariſaical Humility; if they can prove theſe ſins, let them reprove them in Gods Name; but if they are indifferent things, it is cenſoriouſneſs, uncharitableneſs, and pragmaticalneſs to rail at them, and not Chriſtian Reproof.

3. ——— *He muſt manage his Reproof to ſincere ends*; muſt take heed that his aims and intentions be upright and honeſt in reproving. Take heed of mingling any wild-fire of pride, and vain-glory, and ambitious humour of contradicting and controuling others, with thy zeal of reproving; This heat muſt be holy heat, a fire of the Sanctuary as free from the ſmoak of by-ends, and ſelf-intereſt, as may be, purely for Gods glory, and out of hatred unto ſin, and out of love to the ſalvation of thy Brothers ſoul. *Diogenes* (it is ſtoried) reproved *Plato*'s pride, by trampling upon his Velvet Chair, and Cuſhion, but ſays the Author, *Majori faſtu ſuperbum Platonem Diogenes ſuperbior.*

4. *He muſt manage his Reproof in fit ſeaſon*; There is a time to ſpeak, and a time to be ſilent; Reproof is a duty grounded upon an Affirmative Precept. Now 'tis well obſerved by Divines, that Affirmative Precepts bind *ſemper*, but not *ad ſemper*; we muſt always reprove, but we muſt not reprove always; it is a conſtant duty, but it muſt be done in a ſeaſonable opportunity. There are certain *mollia fandi Tempora*, words upon the wheels, as *Solomon* calls them, that are like Apples of Gold; and let me tell you Chriſtians, one word ſpoken in ſeaſon, is worth a thouſand other words. Now it is impoſſible to define and determine all the nicks of time wherein a man ſhould ſtrike in with a Reproof; for this muſt be left to the wiſdom and experience of every Chriſtian, that makes it his buſineſs to be his Brothers keeper; and let him aſſure himſelf, he muſt expect to loſe many an admonition, ſhoot many an Arrow of Reproof, as *Jonathan* did his, under and over, on this ſide and t'other ſide, before he hit the mark.

Rules.

1. *He muſt take a ſeaſon wherein the offender is capable of Reproof.* If a man be drunk, we muſt ſtay till he be ſober, as *Abigail*, 1 *Sam.*

1 *Sam.* 25. 36, 37.——So if a man be all in a heat of paſſion, we muſt ſtay, and come to him, as God did to *Adam*, in the cool of the day, when the fit was over.

2. *We muſt take a ſeaſon wherein we have occaſion to commend a man for his virtues*, and then rub him up for his faults, Sir you are thus and thus, oh but if you would but mend this and that, how excellent it would be! So St. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 11. 2, 17.

3. *We muſt do it as ſoon as ever we can.* and the ſooner the better; a green wound is eaſier healed than an old ſore, *Lev.* 19. 17.

4. *If we have long waited* for fit ſeaſons, and yet cannot find them, you had better make a breach upon ones prudence, than ones conſcience; diſcretion then muſt give place to neceſſity, out with it, and leave the ſucceſs to God.

5. *He muſt manage his Reproof with due conditions and qualifications.* And beloved there are ſeven properties of that Reproof that will in all likelihood both benefit and better our Brother, and alſo ſecure our ſelves from participation of his ſins.

1. *We muſt reprove ſeriouſly and in good earneſt*, ſo as to knock the nail up to the head in the conſcience of the ſinner, *Pſal.* 50. 21.——So ſhould we in our Reproofs, of our Brother, charge him home, theſe things haſt thou done, there is no denying; thou art the man, ſays *Nathan* to *David*; before he was in his parable, but now he ſpeaks plain Engliſh, as we ſay.——*This Jeſus whom ye have crucified*, ſays *Peter* to the *Jews*, and thus we ſhould ſet things in order before him. Sir, is not this and that highly to diſhonour God, and to *crack* your credit, and to *ſhame* your profeſſion, and to *impair* your body, and to *waſte* your eſtate, and to *wound* your conſcience, and to *damn* your precious and immortal ſoul? and therefore for the Lords ſake think on it, and amend it. A looſe and ſquibbing kind of Reproof is like an *ignis Lambens*, as ſoon off as on, and does the man more hurt than good. As *Elies* careleſs and looſe reproving of his lewd Sons, did rather harden them in their villany, than any way reform them. As it is with weak Phyſick adminiſtred to a ſick man, it doth only ſtir the humours, but not purge them away, it leaves the body in a greater and worſe diſtemper than it was before. So 'tis here,——therefore ſays the Apoſtle, *Titus* 1. 13. ἀποτόμως ——cuttingly. A finger that is but juſt prickt, and no more, it is apt to wranckle and feſter, and be worſe, but let it bleed, and there is no danger, it will then ſoon be healed.

2. *We muſt Reprove impartially, and without reſpect of Perſons.* Good men,

men, if they miſcarry, muſt be reproved as well as bad men. If *Peter* temporize, *Paul* will not ſpare him, nor *Barnabas* neither, they ſhall hear on't, *Gal.* 2. Again, great men, be they never ſo great, they ſhould be admoniſhed as well as others, ſo long as they are under the great God, and ſubject to great failings and miſcarriages; Kings, and Nobles, and Magiſtrates, as well as meaner and inferiour perſons. *Nathan* reproved *David*, though a King; and ſo did *Elijah*, *Ahab*; and *Nehemiah* reproved the Nobles, and Rulers for Uſury, and Sabbath-prophanation. Certainly, if any be fit to teach great men, they are as fit to reprove them, for both muſt go together, 2 *Tim.* 4. 2. That's but a drone-like Preaching, that hath loſt the ſting of Reproving. It is the great unhappineſs of Princes and Nobles that they have ſo many flatterers about them, and ſo few Reprovers. *Carneades* in *Plutarch* was wont to ſay, that great mens Sons learned nothing well, but to ride horſes; for men would be ſure to flatter them; If they run, they would lag behind, that they might out-run them; if they wreſtled, they would fall on purpoſe, that they might ſeem to caſt them, *&c.* But a Horſe not knowing a Prince from a Peaſant, would down with him if he could not rule him. Juſt ſo 'tis now, let great men do what they will, both againſt Scripture, and Reaſon, and Law, and Conſcience, they will not want their Paraſites, both to encourage them, and applaud them: If there be not a Law for *Cambyſes* to marry his Siſter, tuſh, what of that, there is a Law for *Cambyſes* to do what he pleaſes; and thus men out of cowardize, and fear of frowns, and wrath, dare not reprove guilty Greatneſs. Oh but if a man be a faithful Monitor, he muſt be impartial in his reproofs. *Agag* muſt be reproved as well as the pooreſt *Amalekite*; and the Mountains muſt be toucht, let them ſmoak and ſume never ſo furiouſly, to allude to that place, *Pſal.* 144. 5. This made that excellent Emperour *Theodoſius* ſo much eſteem *Ambroſe*, *viz.* that he durſt, and would, out of the ſenſe of his duty, reprove even the higheſt and proudeſt.

Ambroſium ob hoc dignum Epiſcopi nomine ſolum novi; but here humility muſt be uſed.

3. *We muſt reprove diſcreetly, making a difference between man and man*; For though it's true, that all are to be reproved, that are offenders, eſpecially within the Pale of the Church, 1 *Cor.* 5. 12. Except they be ſcorners, which Chriſt calls Dogs and Swine, *Mat.* 7. 6. and obſtinate Hereticks, *Tit.* 3. 10. yet all muſt not be handled in the ſame manner; Some will do more with a Rod, than others will do with a Scorpion. A Glaſs is not to be handled ſo roughly as a Brazen Veſſel;

Vessel; this Rule St. *Jude* gives, ver. 22, 23.——Some must be dealt withall with lenitives, others with corrosives; some gently reproved, others sharply rebuked, according to the tenderness or stubbornness of their disposition, or according to the nature and quality of their offences; and here abundance of Rules might be laid down about publick, private, great, small, seldom, or frequent offences. In one word, a Reprover must be like the Thrasher, that the Prophet describes, as one says, *Isa.* 28. 27, 28.

4. *We must reprove compassionately, with the deepest sense of our own failings*, and miscarriages, and so with the greater pity to their infirmities, *Gal.* 6. 1. *Bernard* said of himself, That he never saw another man sin, but he was distrustful and jealous of his own heart, *ille heri, & tu hodie, & ego cras* ——and this would file off a great deal of that rigor and roughness that renders a Reproof so unpleasing, and so unprofitable; for verily Christian tenderness and compassion in the Reprover, is the best way to work sense and passion in the sinner; *Si vis me flere dolendum est primum ipse tibi.*

This is the way to mollifie mens hearts, whereas by a lordly, domineering, austere, rigid Reproof, instead of rendring thy Brother Gods friend, thou dost but render thy self his enemy, *Jam.* 1. 20.

5. *We must reprove charitably, with the greatest love to mens persons*, even then, when we shew the greatest zeal against their sins; for it is one thing to be angry with the sins, and another with his person; therefore we should consult our Brothers credit, and esteem, and honour, and person, while we stab his sin; and not (as one said well) in healing a wound in his conscience and conversation, to leave a skar of reproach upon his person, and a brand of shame and ignominy upon his Name; that were to do the work of an enemy under the vizard of a friend. And thus I remember the Jews generally interpret that Law, *Lev.* 19. 17.——that is, say the *Thalmudists* and *Gemarists*, Thou shalt rebuke thy Brother so, as to reform him, but thou shalt not rebuke thy Brother so, as to shame him; thou shalt rebuke him in love and lenity, he that shames his Brother by rebuking him, bears his sin; nay, say they, he that shames his Brother, shall never enter into the Kingdom of Heaven: Their meaning is, unless the fault be notorious, and publick, and scandalous, for then they may shame him. *I speak it to your shame*, saith *Paul.*

6. *We must reprove meekly, not in rage, and passion, and bitterness*, but in meekness, and sweetness of spirit, this Rule the Apostle gives, 2 *Tim.* 2. 25. Though there may be some warmth in a Reproof, so as to

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fetch off the hair, yet it muſt not be ſcalding hot, ſo as to fetch off the skin. *Elijah* did that with a kiſs, which his man could not do with a ſtaff: Beloved, when a kiſs will do better ——oh take heed of carrying your Teeth in your Tongues; Take ſoft words and hard Arguments to convince gain-ſayers; and ſo gentle reproofs, and ſolid reaſons, to reduce offenders.

7. *We muſt reprove Scripturally*: My meaning is, as near as we can to reprove our Brethren in Scripture-text, and Scripture-language, that ſo it may not ſeem to be we that ſpeak, ſo much as the Spirit of our Father that ſpeaks in us; and this is to reprove with authority, *Tit.* 2. 15. What greater Authority and Majeſty wherewith to awaken the conſcience of a ſinner than the Word of God, by which he ſhould be ruled, and by which he muſt certainly be judged.

Know Reader, That God took the Author to Glory, before he could finiſh this Sermon for the Preſs.

What

What Means may be uſed towards the Converſion of our Carnal Relations?

Rom. 10. 1.

Brethren, my hearts deſire and prayer to God for Iſrael, is, that they might be ſaved.

THis Noble Argumentative Epiſtle of the Apoſtle *Paul* to the *Romans*, was written and dated at *Corinth*, when he was now even ready to ſet ſail for *Jeruſalem*, as the Meſſenger of the Churches, to convey thither the Collections of *Macedonia*, and other places in *Greece* made for the poor Saints of *Judea*; as appears by the 15th Chapter of this Epiſtle, [*But now I go unto Jeruſalem to miniſter unto the Saints. For it hath pleaſed them of Macedonia and Achaia, to make a certain contribution for the poor Saints which are at Jeruſalem.*] It being ſuppoſed to be the ſame journey which is mentioned in the twentieth and one and twentieth Chapters of the *Acts* of the Apoſtles. Rom. 15. 25, 26. Act. 20. 3. & 21. 3, &c.

The time of the penning this Epiſtle, ſome place in the 14th year of *Claudius* the Emperor, ſome in the ſecond, ſome in the ſixth, ſome in the eighth of *Nero*. 'Tis at preſent impertinent to decide that Chronological controverſie. *Capellus in hiſt. Apoſtol. p. 76. Calvis. Uſſer. Pareus.*

It conſiſts principally of two parts; the firſt Doctrinal, the ſecond Hortatory.

The Doctrinal part ſpends its ſtrength upon the great point of Juſtification by Faith, and its glorious effects. Unto which our Apoſtle doth annex a notable diſcourſe of the abſtruſe Myſtery of Predeſtination, from the beginning of the ninth, to the end of the eleventh Chapter; and therein takes occaſion to ſpeak of that doleful Bill of Divorce

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which God had given to the *Jewiſh* Nation. He treats likewiſe of the Calling and Fulneſs of the Gentiles, and the Reſtauration of *Iſrael* in the latter daies.

In each of theſe three Chapters he ſadly bewails the deplorable ſtate of his own kindred, and by all the evincing Arguments poſſible, labours for their converſion to the Faith.

To cut off any further Prologue; In the beginning of this tenth Chapter, he pours out his longings after their Salvation.

In the firſt verſe whereof, be pleaſed to obſerve theſe four parts.

1. *Pauls* holy groans and prayers [*my hearts deſire and prayer to God*] εὐδοκία τῆς ἐμῆς καρδίας; The good will, the hearty wiſhes, deſires and pantings of my ſoul. He lays open the greateſt earneſtneſs of his Spirit, [εὐδοκίαν, τὴν σφοδρὰν ἐπιθυμίαν φησὶν ἐνταῦθα τὴν σπουδὴν καὶτὰ, &c.] *Chryſoſt. in loc.* By this his deſire we are to underſtand a marvellous ſtrong intention of ſpirit, and an earneſt ſtudy and endeavour after accompliſhment. *Heſychius* expounds the term by βούλεσθαι, ἐθέλειν, ἀγαπᾶν, to will, deſire, wiſh, love and delight in the work. He wills it, not only as a poſſible atchievement, but as amiable, he endeavours to compaſs it by all good means, becauſe he propoſes ſo deſirable an end. The ſincerity of our deſires in obtaining of poſſible deſignes, is manifeſted by our diligent endeavours in the uſe of proper ways to effect them. [οὐδεὶς τῶν ἀδυνάτων ἐρᾷ, ἀλλ' ἐπιθυμεῖ ὡς ἐπὶ πολύ,] *Ariſt. Rhet. l. 2. c. 19.* *For the moſt part* (ſays the Philoſopher) *no man delights in, or hankers after impoſſibilities.* No rational man certainly. And therefore we are to conceive, that our Apoſtle doth here under his importunate deſires, couch and imply all holy means to accompliſh his end. Upon which account he preſently ſubjoyns [δέησιν πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν] *his prayer to God* for that purpoſe: of which afterwards. Only at preſent obſerve from the connexion of his prayers to his hearty deſires; Note. That lively are thoſe prayers which flow from the heart. Moſt harmonious in the ears of God are thoſe groans, that mount up to Heaven upon the wings of ardent emanations, out of the depth of our hearts. *Suſpiria è ſulco pectoris ducta.* When the words of our petitions aſcend warm and reeking out of our bowels, when every expreſſion is dipt in our heart blood.

2. The perſons that were the ſubject of his prayers and deſires: *For Iſrael.* And here it is conſiderable in what relation *Iſrael* ſtood to the bleſſed Apoſtle. They were his *Brethren*, his *Kinſmen according to the Fleſh.* *For I alſo* (ſaith *Paul*) *am an Iſraelite, of the ſeed of Abraham,* *of the Tribe of Benjamin.* In another place he acquaints us, that he was *circumciſed the eighth day, of the ſtock of Iſrael, of the Tribe of Benjamin,*

Rom. 9. 3. Rom. 11. 1. Phil. 3. 5. Acts 23. 6.

jamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews, (*i. e.* both by Father and Mother) *as touching the Law a Phariſee.* It appears thence, that the *Iſraelites* were his kindred, his own dear and near relations, remaining for the moſt part in a ſtate of ignorance, as to the *Meſſiah*, and of alienation and eſtrangement from the Covenant of Grace, and the myſtery of the Promiſe through Faith in the blood of a Mediator. For theſe it is, that our Apoſtle groans; for theſe he is ſo ardent in prayer; for theſe he pours out ſuch earneſt petitions to the Father. 2 Cor. 11. 22.

3. The great ſcope and deſign of the Apoſtle for his kindred and relations according to the fleſh, in all his deſires, endeavours, prayers was [εἰς σωτηρίαν] *That they might be ſaved.* The earneſt ſollicitude of his ſpirit, the fervent petitions poured out into the Divine boſome, did all combine in this, that his natural might become ſpiritual relations: that his kindred of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, might through union to Chriſt, be allied to him in the Tribe of *Judah*. What is natural to animals and plants [τὸ ἐφίεσθαι, ὅ τὸν ἀυτὸ, τοιοῦτον καταλιπεῖν ἕτερον] to thirſt after an impreſſion of their own likeneſs upon another; is much more longed for by the Saints, that others might be holy and happy, as well as themſelves, but eſpecially ſuch as are neareſt to them by the bonds of nature. Holy *Paul* doth not preſs after outward injoyments, as health, ſtrength, riches, power, or dominion in the world; that *Iſrael* might have proſperity and plenty in their Streets and Palaces, or that the Kingdom ſhould be reſtored to them from the *Romans*: Not the great things of the Earth, but the greater of Heaven: This his ſoul travels with, that Chriſt might be formed in them, and dwell in their hearts by Faith, that ſo *Iſrael* might be ſaved. *Ariſt. Pol. l. 1. c. 1.*

4. In theſe words we may obſerve likewiſe the kind compellation, wherewith our Apoſtle doth ſalute the Saints at *Rome*, to whom he wrote this Epiſtle, by the name of *Brethren.* Now, though he wrote to the *Gentiles*, yet he lets them know, that his bowels did yearn over his poor kindred, *that they* alſo *might be ſaved.* The reaſon why in this Letter to the *Romans* he doth ſo pathetically mention theſe his deſires, with ſuch ſtrong and vehement aſſeverations, is, becauſe there were great numbers of the *Jews* at *Rome*, and principally of the two Tribes that returned out of the *Babylonian* Captivity; who after the Warrs of *Pompey*, and other *Roman* Generals and Captains in *Judea*, were very many of them tranſplanted into *Italy*: Which is not only atteſted by Civil and Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtorians: but alſo by Scripture it ſelf, declaring that there was a ſolemn Convocation of the *Jews* aſſembled by *Paul* at his arrival. To whom the Apoſtle did firſt preach the Act. 28. 17. &c.

the Goſpel, and related the ſtory of his coming to that Imperial City, by reaſon of his appeal to *Cæſar*.

From all theſe parts laid down together, there reſults this Doctrinal Concluſion.

Obſerv. *That to endeavour the converſion and ſalvation of our near relations, is a moſt important duty.*

The preſident and example of our holy Apoſtle compared with, and confirmed by other Scriptures, will notably evince the truth of this aſſertion. *The manifeſtation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withall.* One great end, why God beſtows the graces of his Spirit upon us, is, that we ſhould ſpend the ſavour thereof upon others. Our diſcourſe muſt be ſeaſoned with the ſalt of grace, that it may miniſter edification to others. Our ſpeech ſhould never overflow in abundance, but like the waters of *Nilus*, to render the neighbouring Plantations fruitful. Grace is ſometimes compared to *Light*, by reaſon of its diffuſive nature; that our ſhining converſations might illuſtrate others in the paths of Truth and Holineſs. Sometimes Grace is likened to *Spikenard*, to *perfumed ointment*, which muſt not be ſhut up in a box, though of pureſt Alabaſter, but opened, that the whole houſe may be filled with the fragrant odour thereof. To *Oyl*, to the coſtly ſacred Oyl that ran down not only upon the beard of *Aaron*, but to the skirts of his garments. To *Talents*, which muſt be induſtriouſly traded with, and not laid up in napkins. To *Dews*, *Showers*, *Waters*, becauſe of their fructifying virtue. To a *generative Principle*, becauſe of its begetting power and *influence*. We are therefore commanded, exhorted, directed to *edifie one another*, to *exhort* one another, to *admoniſh* one another, to *turn* one another, as that phraſe in *Ezekiel* ſeems to import [*& convertifacite*] and make others to be converted as well as our ſelves; to provoke one another to love and to good works. When converted, we are injoined to ſtrengthen our Brethen, that we may ſave their ſouls from death, and hide a multitude of ſins.

1 Cor. 12. 7.
Col. 4. 6.
Eph. 4. 29.
Cant. 1. 12.
Prov. 27. 9.
John 12. 3.
Pſal. 133. 2.
1 Theſ. 5. 11.
Rom. 14. 19.
Heb. 3. 13.
Col. 3. 16.
וחשיבו
Ezek. 18. 30.
Heb. 10. 24.
Jam. 5. 20.

Now the principal Objects of this excellent duty are ſuch with whom we converſe; ſuch to whom we are obliged and connexed by the bonds and links of nature, office, or vicinity of habitation.

Hence was it that our bleſſed Lord, while he walked in the valley of his Incarnation, exerciſed his Miniſtry moſt part among his kinred, relations, and neighbours; at *Nazareth*, *Capernaum*, *Bethſaida*, near the Sea of *Tiberias*, at *Cana*, and other Regions of *Galilee*, in which parts he had received his Education. *Andrew* when he underſtood the call of Chriſt, the great Saviour of the world, he preſently ſeeks out

Joh. 1. 41.

out his Brother *Simon* to bring him to the *Meſſiah*. *Philip* after the like manifeſtation, looks out for *Nathaniel*, and in a great extaſie of ſpirit, cries out [ἑυρηκα, ἑυρηκα,] *We have found him of whom Moſes and the Prophets did write.* There are many inſtances of this nature both in the Old and New Teſtament. *Abraham* and *Joſhua* were famous in their Generations for this work; they counted it their principal buſineſs, they made it their great care to inſtruct their Families in the fear and ſervice of the great God. *David* alſo ingages to *walk in his houſe* with a perfect heart, that by his exemplary pattern he might gain over his Family to the Lord. *Matthew* the Publican (we read) did invite all the Tribute-gatherers that were of his own Fraternity and Profeſſion, to a great Feaſt, that they might ſit down with Chriſt, and feed upon his heavenly Doctrine. The great man in the City of *Capernaum* brings in his whole Family to the belief of the Truth. *Cornelius* the *Roman* Centurion, who *was* quartered at *Ceſarea*, calls his Relations together, to hear the Doctrine of Faith and Repentance. The woman in the Goſpel having found the loſt groat, after great pains and diligence, calls in her friends and neighbours to rejoyce with her. *Criſpus* and the Jaylor, and *Lydia*, and *Stephanas*, are eminent Examples of this duty; by whoſe conſcientious care and procurement, it may be ſuppoſed, that their whole houſholds came under the roof of Chriſt; becauſe preſently after that we have heard of their own perſonal Baptiſm, we find their Families alſo waſhed in that ſacred Laver.

John 1. 45. Pſal. 101. 2. Luk. 5. 29. John 4. 53. Act. 10. 24. Luk. 15. 9.

I ſhall not inſiſt upon Arguments, to prove the incumbent neceſſity of this duty, or Motives to allure you to the practice of it: I might deduce it as an inference conſequent from the Law of Nature, to uſe our greateſt indeavours that our Relations might obtain an union to the beſt and higheſt good. I might draw it from the Divine Injunction. I might excite your diligence from the conſideration of the dreadful danger following its neglect; from the comfort that will flow into thy boſom upon the exerciſe of it, ſince it is a notable evidence of the ſincerity of Grace in thine own heart. None but ſuch as have ſeen and taſted, can cry out to others with an holy affectionate vehemency. O come *taſte and ſee that the Lord is good*! The Wine of the Kingdom having once warmed the hearts of Saints, ſends up vivacious ſpirits, and fills their mouths with a holy loquacity. I might further provoke thee to this excellent work, by the rich benefit in gaining ſuch to love thee, whoſe affections will exceed all natural love whatever, and by the great reward that ſhall enſue in the life to come. For

Pſal. 78. 5. Pſal. 34. 8.

thy;

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Dan. 12. 3. *they that turn many to righteouſneſs, ſhall ſhine as the ſtars for ever and ever.*

O Brethren, if Families were holy, then Cities, then Nations would quickly prove Mountains of Holineſs, and Seats for the Throne of God. We are apt to cry out of bad times; Alas, thoſe unclean Neſts of ungodly Families have been the cauſes of all the wickedneſs in all Ages and Generations to this day. Therefore whoever thou art, on whom the Grace of God hath ſhined, ſtudy that holy art of Divine Reflection, and Re-percuſſion of that light on others hearts, which brings me to an uſeful and practical queſtion.

Queſt. You'l ſay, *What courſe ſhall we take, what means ſhall we uſe, what method will you preſcribe, that we may be able to manage this important and weighty duty; that we may be helpful towards the converſion and ſalvation of our near Relations that are in the ſtate of nature?*

I confeſs this Queſtion is of grand importance, and being properly ſolved, may prove of great influence in all places where we are caſt by Divine Providence. There is ſcarce a family, ſcarce a perſon living, who may not be comprehended within the verge and limits of this diſcourſe.

Anſ. In anſwer therefore to it, I ſhall ſpend the principal part of my time, and that I may handle it the more diſtinctly; I ſhall rank ſuch as may deſire ſatisfaction and direction in this weighty and excellent caſe under three forms or orders: Such as are either Superiours, Equals, or Inferiours. But before I enter into the main body of the Anſwer, I ſhall crave leave to premiſe three things.

1. That this Queſtion is not to be underſtood of perſons in publick capacity and concernment, as Magiſtrates or Miniſters; but of Family-Relations, Kindred Co-habitants, Neighbours, Friends, and Acquaintants, of ſuch as have frequent converſe together in Civil Societies, and often commerce in dealings; but principally of Oeconomical Relatives, or ſuch as are nigh to each other by blood or affinity.

2. That Saving-Converſion is in the power of God alone to effect, as being the primary and principal efficient cauſe of all thoſe gracious works that accompany ſalvation. There is none able to kindle Grace in the heart, but he who hath his fire in *Zion*, and his furnace in *Jeruſalem*. Yet notwithſtanding all of us in our ſeveral ſtations, as ſubordinate inſtruments, may and muſt uſe all wholeſom means that are of Divine Appointment, conducing to ſuch a bleſſed end.

3. That

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3. That there are different ſtates, conditions, capacities, and qualifications among ſuch Relations, whoſe converſion we ſhould endeavour. Some being perhaps enormouſly and outragiouſly wicked; others morally civil; and yet further, others poſſibly may be conformable to the inſtitutions of the external worſhip of God. Of theſe I may ſpeak [*Sparſim, opere intertexto*] as the particulars will bear, together with ſuch other appendant caſes that may hold ſome conſanguinity with the general Queſtion.

To begin then with the firſt branch.

Queſt. I. *What means Superiors (principally in Family-relations) ſhould uſe to draw on their inferiours to reliſh and ſavour the things of God?* True it is what *Jerom* ſays [*fiunt, non naſcuntur Chriſtiani*] No man is born a Chriſtian, but an heir of wrath and Divine juſtice. For the obtaining of the New birth then, in ſuch as are committed to our charge, I ſhall draw up directions under twelve heads. Some whereof, though uſual and obvious, in ſuch as treat upon Oeconomical duties, yet being further improved, may by no means be here paſt by in ſilence, ſince they are exceeding uſeful, and no leſs practical than others. Moſt men under the Goſpel periſh for want of practiſing known Duties; wherefore let me beg of thee, O Chriſtian, that every preſcription may be duly weighed, and conſciencioufly improved, ſo ſhalt thou not doubt of admirable ſucceſs through Divine aſſiſtance.

Hieronym. ad Lætam. Tom. 1. p. 55. edit. Lugd. 1530.

1. In the firſt place, Preſerve and uphold the honour and preheminence of that ſtation wherein God hath ſet you, by all prudent means. The Prophet bewails thoſe times wherein the *Child ſhall behave himſelf proudly againſt the Ancient, and the baſe againſt the honourable.* Diſtance of years calls for diſtance of deportment. A Father may challenge honour and reverence; a Maſter his due fear and ſubjection from his ſervant. What is duty in the inferiour to yield, is prudence in the ſuperiour to maintain. It is therefore wiſely adviſ'd by the Philoſopher, that no perſons ſhould marry over-early [*λίαν πάρεγγυς εἶναι πολλὴν ἔχει δυσχέρειαν· ἴσως γὰρ οὐδὲν ἧττον ὑπάρχει τοῖς τοιούτοις ὥσπερ ἡ λιχνείαις ἢ δεῖ τὴν οἰκονομίαν· διὸ γυμναστικὸν τὸ πάρεγγυς*] For if Parents and Children prove too near in age, there may follow great inconveniencies; In that, too much propinquity of years diminiſheth reverence in children, and oftentimes produces contentions in the management of Family-affairs. Let ſuch a diſtance be preſerved, as may obtain the effectual iſſue of that counſel which *Jerom* gives to *Gaudentius* about the education of *Pacatula* [*Matris nutum*

Iſa. 3. 5.

Arift. Pol. l. 7. c. 16.

Hieronym. ad Gaudent. Tom. 1 p. 101.

pro verbis ac monitis & pro imperio habeat. Amet ut Parentem, ſubjiciatur ut Dominæ, timeat ut Magiſtram. Let the Childe eſteem the nod of her mother in lieu of words, admonitions, and commands; let the Mother be loved as a Parent, ſubjected to as a Lady, feared as a Miſtreſs] condeſcenſion to mean, ſordid, and contemptible actions, draws ſcorn and diſdain upon ſuperiours. As reverence and obedience is injoyned to inferiours; ſo Rulers ſhould manage and order their actions with ſuch gravity and ſobriety before them, as may gain ſome awe and reſpect from their hearts. No wonder, if that Ruler be contemned and ſleighted, who diſgraceth himſelf. Some are apt to count it a piece of gracious humility and lowlineſs of ſpirit; but they are greatly miſtaken: It argues rather a baſe, low, degenerate temper. Be as humble before God, as reverential to Rulers, as affable to Equals as thou canſt; but ever remember to maintain the eminency of thy place above ſuperiors. It is not heavenly, no nor moral wiſdome, to entertain diſcourſe of trivial and frivolous matters, with thoſe that are under your inſpection and government. Let converſe with inferiours be ſpent, not upon ſuperfluous, but neceſſary ſubjects. It is a good precept of the *Stoick*, to abſtain from moving of laughter by jeſts among familiars, for it will have that influence [τὸν ἐπὶ τὰ σκώμματα εἰς ἀνάπαυσιν] to leſſen their reverence towards thee. There is a great deal of reverence to be manifeſted by Superiors towards Youth; if they would cheriſh and preſerve *that* due reverence which ought to be in the hearts of young ones towards themſelves. And yet notwithſtanding, you muſt not carry your ſelves with any proud, ſupercilious, or faſtuous deportment; your countenance, though grave, yet muſt not be ſtern. As you need not indent your cheeks with continual ſmiles, ſo neither to plow your fore-heads with rough and ſowre wrinkles. A ſober affability, an unaffected and amiable gravity will ſufficiently chaſtiſe contempt, and nouriſh a reverent love. Rigid auſterity in words and actions will produce a ſlaviſh diſ-ſpirited temper in children and ſervants; that when they come to years they prove either more difficult to pleaſe than their Fathers before them, or elſe ſo puſillanimous, that they are rendred unfit to manage the work of their Generation among whom they converſe. It is a maxim of *Plato* [σφόδρα γὰρ ἀγρία δούλωσις πανωνδὲ ἀνελευθέρους καὶ μισανθρώπους, &c. ἐποιεῖ] that over-much ruſtick ſlavery renders them dejected, illiberal, and haters of mankind. Carry your ſelves therefore in that manner, that they may neither fear or hate your moroſity, nor grow wanton upon the commonneſs and ſupinity of your carriage. If inferiors repute their Rulers not wiſe enough

Epictet. c. 54.

Maxima debetur puerîs reverentia. μάλιστα δὲ αἰχυνὲ σαυτὸν Pythag. aur. carm.

Plato de leg. l. 7. Tom. 2. p. 791 Ed. H. Steph.

to

to govern them; all their inſtructions will fall to the ground [*Regimen eſſe non poteſt, niſi fuerit jugiter in rectore judicium*] Judgment and Prudence in a Ruler, is the foundation of the conſiſtency of Government. *Salvian. de Gub. Dei l. 1. p. 20. Ed. Oxon.*

2. Be frequent, and pithy, and clear, in Family inſtruction. Nature without Moral diſcipline is blind, could a Heathen ſay. Without Heavenly inſtruction it's ſealed up to Eternal darkneſs. We are all like Barren-heaths, and Stony-deſerts by nature: Inſtruction is the culture and improvement of the ſoul. 'Tis obſerved by Naturaliſts, that Bees do [*βεχχίαν λίθον ἐν τοῖς ποσὶ κομίζουσι*] carry ſmall gravel in their feet, to poize their little bodies through the ſtormy winds. Such are inſtructions to the floating and wavering minds of youth. The keel of their weak judgments would ſoon over-ſet without the ballaſt of Diſcipline; their converſations would ſoon prove unfruitful, or over-ſpread with the rampant briers of vice and ſin, unleſs well manured and laboured upon, and moiſtned with the ſweet ſhowers of parental teachings. Wherefore all inferious are by God referred to their Rulers, that they may drink in the ſoul-refreſhing dews of prudent precepts. Even women are commanded *to learn in ſilence*, with all ſubjection, [*γυναικὶ κόσμος ἡ σιγὴ φέρει*]; Silence is a womans ornament, as a great Maſter of wiſdom hath obſerved, Their ears ſhould be more exerciſed than their tongues. *If they will learn any thing, let them ask their Husbands at home*; who are commanded *to dwell with them according to knowledg.* As for ſervants and children, the caſe is more evident and clear: But in all your inſtructions, have a care of tedious prolixity; make up the ſhortneſs of your diſcourſe by frequency. Thou art injoyned to talk of Gods precepts, *when thou ſitteſt in thine houſe, when thou walkeſt by the way, and when thou lieſt down, and when thou riſeſt up.* A little now, and a little then. When thou wouldeſt accuſtom a child to any uſeful quality, begin betimes, ('tis the counſel even of a Heathen) but yet ἐπὶ πρόσαγωγῆς δ' ἐθίζουσι, inure him by degrees. As the Precepts and Axioms by which a wiſe man ſhould guide his life according to the royal Moraliſt ſhould be [βεχχία καὶ ποιχνιώδη] brief and compendious: So much more for youth. Long Orations burthen their ſmall memories too much, and (through ſuch imprudence) may occaſion the loathing of ſpiritual Manna, conſidering their being yet in the ſtate of nature. As Phyſicians in their Diætetical precepts preſcribe to children, little and often: ſo muſt we deal with beginners in the things of God. A young plant may quickly be over-glutted with manure, and rotted with too much watering. *Plut. περὶ παιδ. Ed. H. Steph. p. 2.* *Ælian. de animal. l. c. 11.* 1 Tim. 2. 11. *Arist. Pol. l. 1. c. 8. p. 86.* 1 Cor. 14. 35. 1 Pet. 3. 7. Iſa. 38. 19. Deut. 6. 7. & 11, 18. *Arist. Pol. l. 7. c. 17.* *Antonin. de ſeipſo. l. 4 p. 69 Ed. Lon. 1643.*

Weak Eyes newly opened from ſleep, cannot bear the glaring Win-
Iſa. 28. 20. dows, ſcarce a candle at the firſt. *Line upon line, and precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little.* You muſt drive the little ones, as *Jacob*
Gen. 33. 13. did, very gently towards *Canaan.*

Entertain their tender attentions with diſcourſes of Gods infinite greatneſs, and amiable goodneſs, of the glories of heaven, of the torments of hell. Things that affect the ſenſes muſt be ſpiritualized to them, catch their affections by a holy craft. Deal as much in ſimilitudes as thou canſt. If you be together in a garden, draw ſome ſweet and heavenly diſcourſe out of the beautiful flowers: If by a river-ſide, treat of the water of Life, and the rivers of pleaſure that are at Gods right hand: If in a field of corn, ſpeak of the nouriſhing quality of the bread of Life: If you ſee birds flying in the air, or hear them ſinging in the woods, teach them the All-wiſe providence of God, that gives them their meat in due ſeaſon: If thou lookeſt up to the Sun, Moon, and Stars, tell them, they are but the ſhining ſpangles of the out-houſes of heaven: oh then what glory is there within! If thou ſeeſt a Rain-bow to diaper ſome wateriſh cloud, talk of the Covenant of God. Theſe and many more may be like ſo many golden links, draw-
Hoſ. 12. 10. ing Divine things into their memories. *I have uſed ſimilitudes* by my ſervants the Prophets, ſaith God. Moreover, let young ones read and learn by heart ſome portions of the Hiſtorical books of holy Scripture. But above all, the beſt way of inſtitution, eſpecially as to the
2 Tim. 1. 13. younger ſort, may be performed by Catechiſms, Plat-forms of ſound words, by Queſtion and Anſwer in a ſhort compendious method; whoſe terms being clear and diſtinct, might be phraſed out of holy Scripture, and fitted to their capacities by a plain, though ſolid ſtile, and to their memories by brief expreſſions.

Obj. *But ſome may object, That Children, not well underſtanding what they repeat, do but prophane the Name of God.*

Anſw. To this I anſwer; That our reaſonings ought not to countermand, or contradict Divine injunctions. We are commanded by God
Deut. 6. 7. in the Book of *Deuteronomy*, to whet the Law upon our *Children. Train*
Prov. 22. *up a child in the way he ſhould go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.* By the bending of young trees, and putting young fruit into glaſſes, you may form them into what ſhape you pleaſe. The A-
poſtle commends the preſident of *Timothy* to the whole Chriſtian
2 Tim. 3. 15. world, that [ἀπὸ βρέφους] from a little ſucking child, as the word
Jer. 1. 5. imports, he had known the holy Scriptures. Some children have been
Luk. 1. 41, 44 ſanctified from the birth, as is evident in *Jeremy*, and *John Baptiſt.*

Now

Now we being ignorant, who are under the election of God, muſt uſe the means to all, eſpecially ſuch as are under the ſœderal ſtipulation between God and us; ſuch as are the children of believing Parents. They are commanded to *remember* their *Creator in the dayes of their youth:* And who ſhould make ſuch impreſſions of God upon their hearts, but thoſe that are over them by Divine appointment, who ought to *bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.* As ſeals are to be imprinted upon the wax, while it is tender: [ὥσπερ αἱ μαθήσεις ταῖς τῶν ἐτὶ παιδίων ψυχαῖς ἐναπομυττῶνται] ſo, teaching and inſtruction will beſt fix upon their minds while yet they are children. So ſoon as ever reaſon begins to ſprout forth, yea as ſoon as they are drawn from the breaſts, begin to ſeaſon younglings with the ſenſe of Gods majeſty and mercy. Gardiners begin to graft, ſo ſoon as ever the ſap begins to ariſe in the ſpring, and the bud of the ſtock to ſwell and inlarge. Colts muſt be backt before their mettle grows too high; and Heifers muſt be uſed to the yoak before they attain to their full ſtrength, or elſe they will prove unſerviceable. God commanded in the old Law, more Lambs, Kids, and Bullocks, young Turtles, and Pidgeons, to be offered upon his Altar, than thoſe of elder growth: Firſt-fruits and *green-corn* muſt be preſented to the Lord. To intimate the dedication of our children (thoſe *reaſonable Sacrifices*) unto the Temple and ſervice of God, while they are young and tender. The ſooner you ſow, the ſooner you may reap. *Sow thy ſeed in the morning*, ſayes *Solomon.* The benefit of timely inſtruction is ſcarce imaginable. But I come to the third.

Eccleſ. 12. 1. Ephes. 6. 4. *Plutarch. περὶ παιδ. p. 5.* Iſa. 28. 9. Levit. 2. 14. Rom. 12. 1. Eccleſ. 11. 2.

3. Add to thine inſtructions preceptive injunctions, lay it as a charge upon their ſouls in the name of God, that they hearken to, and obey thine *Inſtitutions.* Every houſe is nnder a kinde of kingly Government [πᾶσα οἰκία βασιλεύεται, &c. θεμιστεύει δ' ἕκαστος παίδων *Ariſt. Pol. l. 1. c. 1.* ἠδ' ἀλόχων] and a Ruler gives laws to Wife and Children. An inſtance we have in the caſe of *Solomon*, who acquaints us that he was *his Fathers Son, tender and onely beloved in the ſight of his Mother. He taught me alſo, and ſaid unto me; Let thine heart retain my words, keep my Commandments and live.* When *David* was ready to dye, *Solomon*, the Text ſayes, was [*yet young and tender*] and notwithſtanding that, his Father inſtructs him in many grave and excellent leſſons, and in the Book of *Kings* 'tis remarkable, that when *Davids* deceaſe drew nigh, *he charged Solomon his ſon, ſaying*, &c. Now when *Solomon* came to the Crown, he was but eighteen years old, or nineteen at the moſt, as the learned ſeem to evince from ſeveral paſſages of *Davids*.

Prov. 4. 3. 4. 1 Chro. 22. 5. & 29. 1. 1 Chro. 28. 9. &c. 1 King. 2. 1. *Uſſer. annal. pt. 1. p. 56.*

Rawleigh.hiſt. pt. l.2. c.18. §. 4. *vide* reign. How young then was he when his Father *David*, and his Mother *Bathſhebah* begin to inſtruct him, and lay their preceptive charge upon him. This charging of obedience upon young ones, is like the tying and claying on of the graft upon the ſtock. *Senec. Epiſt. 38.* [*Non multis opus eſt, ſed efficacibus*] Efficacious words rather than many are to be ſought, ſtudied, and uſed.

Nay, women have both preſident and precept alſo for this work, as who do more frequently converſe with their children in their tender Age? We have an excellent example in *Bathſhebah* teaching her Son, and *preſſing* Divine precepts upon his heart, ſhe gave alſo a portion of inſtruction, as well as of food to her ſervants and maidens. Antient Matrons are commanded alſo by the Apoſtle to teach younger women the works of ſobriety and obedience. For this matter *Abraham* was commended by God himſelf, as a pattern to all poſterity. *I know him* (ſays God) *that he will* command *his children, and his houſhold after him, and they ſhall keep the way of the Lord to do juſtice and judgment, &c.* And therefore God was pleaſed to reveal ſecrets to him. To conclude, It is good to edge your precepts and inſtructions with ſome notable remembrances of the great day, as that holy and learned Mr. *Bolton* did to his children upon his Death-bed; for ſpeaking of the inſtructions that he had given them in the time of his ſickneſs, and before, he hoped they would remember it, and verily believed *that none of them durſt think to meet him at that great Tribunal in an unregenerate ſtate.*

Prov. 1.8. & 6. 20. & 31. 1. Pr. 31. 15. 16. Titus 2. 3, 4. Gen. 18. 19. Mr. *Bolton's* Life, p. 33. Printed with his Works. 4to. *Anno* 1639.

4. Set a narrow guard upon the firſt ſproutings of Sin in their converſations. Cruſh Vipers in the Egge. Exerciſe your hazle-rods upon the Serpents heads, when they firſt creep out of their holes, being chill and feeble in the beginning of the ſpring. I will *early* deſtroy all the wicked of the Land, ſayes *David*. You muſt ſet about this work betimes, check every evil and unſavoury word at the firſt hearing; watch the beginnings, the firſt bubblings of corruption in them. A man may pull off a tender bud with eaſe, but if he let it grow to a branch, it will coſt him ſome pains. It is obſerved by experienced Naturaliſts, that a Common bringing forth nothing but Fern, may be made very good ground: if when the weed comes up tender and green, it be often cut down, you will (in three or four times) diſcourage the root, and make it dye away. It may prove ſo through Divine bleſſing, as to the ſhootings up of original corruption, if thou be diligent and conſtant at firſt. Take us the Foxes, nay the *little Foxes*, that ſpoil the Vines; this is the way to deſtroy their race, as well as to preſerve

Pſal. 101. 8. Cant. 2. 15.

preſerve your tender Grapes. *David* ſmote *Goliah* in the fore-head; he ſmites the Devil and Sin in the fore-head [*qui initio tentationis vincit*] that falls upon, and overcomes temptation at firſt. It is a ſaying of *Salvian* [*Cum primum homo peccare incipit, Æternum ſibi accendit ignem*] When one firſt begins to ſin, then he kindles the Eternal fire] Oh that you would then begin to caſt water upon the firſt kindlings of ſin in your little ones! Cut off the occaſions of ſin by prudent interpoſition. It is ſtrange to ſee, what excuſes and palliations for ſin, what colluſions in ſpeech little Children will uſe? Before thou canſt teach them to ſpeak plain Engliſh, the Devil, and a corrupt heart, will teach them to ſpeak plain lies. While their tongues do yet falter much in pronunciation; they'l falter more in double ſpeaking. What great need is there then to put a curb and bridle upon thy childs tongue as well as thine own. Undermine their fallacies by diſcreet examinations, and ſagacious queſtions. If this work be not ſet to betimes, poſſibly in proceſs of years they may prove too cunning to be catcht, unleſs thou ſeaſon them quickly with the awe of Gods judgments, and the danger of ſin: Teach their conſcience to bluſh, as well as their cheeks, that they may from an in-wrought principle eſchew the evil, and do the good. Elſe they may too ſoon prove like the Hares in *Ælian*, that by leaping this way and that way, when they come nigh their muſe, do [παρέξαι τὰ ἴχνη] confound their footſteps to prevent diſcovery. If thou ſuffer a childe, or a yonng ſervant, to go on in ſin unregarded, untaught, unchid, and think 'tis too little to minde at firſt; that ſinful folly will be thy ſcourge in the end. God many times whips an aged Parent by that childe, which was unwhipt at firſt. *Adonijah* had well nigh broken the deſign of *David* about *Solomons* being ſet in the Throne; whom his Father had *never diſpleaſed* by ſaying, why haſt thou done ſo? that is, never checkt him for his faults. The means to take away the root, and foundation of evil cuſtomes and habits, is to fall a weeding in the ſpring of thy childes life [*Ægre reprehendas quod ſinis conſueſcere.*] Reproofs will go down untowardly, when children come once to their *teens*, when their years come up to double numbers.

Stella in Luc. *Salv. de Gub. Dei. l. 4. p. 116.* *Pſal. 39. 1.* *Ælian. de anim. nat. l. 6. c. 47.* 1 *King. 1. 6.* *Hieron. ad Gaud. p. 101.*

5: Preſerve them from evil ſociety. *David* not onely hated ſin in general, but eſpecially he deteſted to have it become an inmate in his houſe. *He that worketh deceit ſhall not dwell within my houſe: He that telleth lies ſhall not tarry in my ſight.* That ſo the evil example, and pitch-like ſociety of wicked perſons might not cleave to, and corrupt his near Relations. Children are like the *Polypus* in *Ælian*, that turns into

Pſal 101. 7. 8. *Æl. Var. hiſt.*

into colour into of rock or weed in the Sea that lies neareſt. Imitation is natural to Children: Aſſociates and companions are the patterns of their imitation. Wherefore *Plutarch* in his Tract about the education of children, adviſing ſome *Grecian* boys to be brought up with them, gives this precept, that theſe σύντροφα παιδία ſhould be σωφρόνων τρόπους, of vertuous manners and behaviours, leſt children ſhould contract ſome vice from ill ſociety. For, according to the Proverb, He that lives with a lame man, will learn to limp. Nay, one greater than *Plutarch* tells us, That *with a furious man we ſhould not go, leſt we learn his ways.* Children eſpecially may be dangerouſly infected by a lewd and corrupt company. Many children of godly parents have had their manners ſouled and vitiated extreamly by frequent and familiar converſe with the naughty children of wicked neighbours.

Plut. περὶ παιδ. *p.* 6.

Prov. 22. 24, 25.

6. In the next place, Let ſeaſonable and prudent rebukes be adminiſtred, according to the nature and quality of their offences. Begin gently, uſe all perſwaſive motives to draw and allure them, if poſſible, to the ways of God; tell them of the rewards of glory, of the ſweet ſociety in Heaven: Endeavour to ſatisfie their hearts, that God is able to fill their ſouls with ſuch joys, as are not to be found in the creatures. *Of ſome having compaſſion making a difference.* But if this will not do, then begin to mix ſome more ſevere expreſſions of thy holy anger againſt ſin. As there is a concatenation in virtues, ſo in paſſions. Love and anger are not altogether [ἀσύστατα] incompatible affections. Nay love may be the principle and foundation of that anger, which ſhoots its rebuking Arrows againſt the But of ſin. It is well obſerved by the Philoſopher [Γίγνεται τὰ ἐγκλήματα ἢ ἀεὶ μεμψις ἐν τῷ κατὰ τὸ χρήσιμον φιλίᾳ] There may be accuſations and reprehenſion connext with that love, which deſigns the profit and benefit of the perſons beloved, and that (ἐυλόγως, as he ſays) according to the Rule even of right reaſon. Thou mayeſt tell thy child, and that with ſome grains of vehemency, that if he continue in ſinful courſes, that God will be angry, and thou wilt be angry, and then let him know what a *fearful thing it is, to fall into the hands of the living God.* This is the way to *be angry, and not to ſin*, as the Apoſtle commands. Let not your paſſions, like unruly torrents, overflow the banks that are limited by Scripture and reaſon There is a grave and ſober anger, that will procure Reverence, and advance Reformation. That which is mixt with horrid noiſe and clamours, floweth from the breaſts of fools. In vain ſhalt thou attempt to reclaim others, who art ſo exorbitant thy ſelf. He that lets looſe the reins upon the necks of the unruly horſes of his

Jude 22.

Ariſt. Ethic. l. 10. *c.* 13.

Heb. 10. 31.

Epheſ. 4. 16.

his passions, will endanger the tumbling his reason out of the Chariot. How shall that person in his rebukes speak reason to another, that hath lost his own? He that is a slave to his irascible appetite, can never manage ingenuous reproofs. A childe can never perswade himself that such anger proceedeth from love, when he is made the sink to receive the daily disgorgements of a Cholerick stomach; when the unhappy necessity of his relation tyes him to be alwayes in the way, where an angry disposition must vent and empty it self. If thou that rulest be thus unruly, how canst thou expect thy Inferiours to be regular, when thy uncomely demeanour does almost convince them, that love can hardly be the genuine root of thine anger, but that they are made the sad objects of thy native temper, or that thy reprehension is spiced with hatred? Observe therefore a prudent administration of thy Rebukes. Gild those bitter pills with the hopes of recovering thy favour upon amendment, mix these unpleasant potions [τοῖς γλυκέσι χυμοῖς] with some sweet emollient juyces, that such inter-woven lenity may procure access for your admonitions, and effect your desired issue. The quality of the offence, and the various aggravations of it, must state the quantity, measure, and duration of thine anger. Great faults, if repeated, deserve a greater ardency of spirit. Consider likewise the station and place of thy several relations. A Wife ought not to be rebuked before Children and Servants, least her subordinate authority be diminished. Contempt cast upon the Wife, will reflect upon the husband at last. *Yea, for smaller offences in Children and Servants, if they be not committed openly, rebuke them apart, and in private. But above all, Take heed thou be not found more severe in reproving faults against thy self, than sins against the great God. *They that honour me* (saith God to *Eli*, in the case of his sons) *I will honour, and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed.* It is a point of excellent wisdome to manage thy Family aright in these cases. A Pilot may shew as much skill and dexterity in steering of a little Catch or Pinnace of pleasure, as of the vast Gallions of *Spain*. If thou hast cause to be angry, yet let not thy storms run all upon the Rocks, but endeavour [ταχέως καθοπλισμῆναι, μᾶλλον ὀξύθυμον ὄντα δεῖ τὸν πατέρα ἢ βαρύθυμον] speedily to cool the Inflammation, to abate the Feaver, and slake the fire of anger: It is better for a Father to be often and nimble, than to be heavy and durable in his wrath. Wink at infirmities; if not such as are immediately sinful, chide them with frowns, and not with bitter assaults; reserve thy publick and sharp reprehensions for open and scandalous offences, for reiterated and repeated transgressions

Plut ibid p. 22. Gassend. in Epicur. Tom. 3. p. 1511.

1 Sam. 2. 30.

Plut. ib. p. 23.

greſſions which bear a ſhew of great neglect, if not of ſome contempt and diſdain.

7. Keep up a conſtant and vigorous practice of holy Duties in thy family. As for me, ſayes *Joſhuah*, *I and my houſe will ſerve the Lord.* *Moſes* commanded the *Iſraelites* to go over the Laws and Precepts which he had given them from God, in their own families in private among their Children. The Inſtructions and Exhortations of Gods Miniſters in publick, ſhould be repeated at home, and whetted to and again upon the little ones. *Samuel* had a Feaſt upon the Sacrifice in his own houſe. *Job* and others had Sacrifices in their own Families. The Paſſeover-Lamb was to be eaten in every particular houſe. God ſayes, he will *pour out* his *fury upon the families that call not upon his Name.* There are times that *every family* muſt be *apart*, as well as *every wife* and perſon *apart*. All the Males of *Abrahams* Family were appointed to paſs under the ordinance of Circumciſion. The keeping up of Family-duties makes every little houſe become a Sanctuary, a *Bethel*, a houſe of God. And here I would adviſe that Chriſtians be not over-tedious in their Duties of private Worſhip. I have heard from a near relation of that holy man Mr. *Dod*, that he gave this counſel, that the conſtant Family-prayers ſhould not ordinarily exceed above a quarter of an hour, if ſo much. The morning and evening Sacrifices at the Temple, and the Paſſeover-offerings (which were for every family) conſiſted but of one Lamb. Take heed of making the wayes of God irkſome, and unpleaſant. If God draw forth thy heart ſometimes, do not reject and repreſs Divine breathings; but uſually labour for ſuccinctneſs and brevity, ſuch as may ſtand with holy reverence to God, ſo as not to huddle over excellent and weighty duties, and yet ſuch as may render religious worſhip, deſirable in the Eyes of thoſe whom thou wouldeſt have to look towards *Canaan*. The Spirit is willing many a times when the Fleſh is weak, and a perſon may better for a little time keep his thoughts from wandring and diſcompoſure, when as the large expence of Expreſſions gives occaſion for too much diverſion. *God is in Heaven, and thou upon Earth, therefore let thy words be few.* When our Lord gave his Diſciples a form of Prayer, which was for quotidian and daily uſe, as appears by that petition, Give us *this day* our daily bread: you know how ſhort and compendious it is. The Spirits are like ſtrings of Harps and Bows, which if never remitted and ſlackened, will crack, and make thoſe Inſtruments unſerviceable. It is of good uſe likewiſe to vary the duties of Religion; ſometimes ſing, and ſometimes read, ſometimes repeat, ſometimes

Joſh. 24. 15.
Deut. 6. 7.
1 Sam. 9. 12, 22.
Exod. 12. 3, 4
Zech. 12. 12, 13.
Eccleſ. 5. 2.
Plut. περὶ παιδ.

times catechize, sometimes exhort. [*Orationi lectio, lectioni succedat oratio, breve videbitur tempus, quod tantis operum varietatibus occupatur.*] It was the direction of that holy Hermite of *Bethlehem*. Let reading succeed prayer, and prayer reading: That time will seem short which is exercised with such variety of works. *Aristotle* observes out of a Poet, [μεταβολὴ πάντων γλυκύτατον, διὰ τοῦτο τρυφερὸν] That, Change is a most sweet thing, by reason of our pravity. Indeed, sayes the Philosopher, unto simple natures, the same action is most pleasant, and therefore God delights in one and the same simple pleasure. However let us use the best art we can to draw on our own hearts, as well as of inferiors, to delight more constantly in holy duties. But in two things be principally frequent; the offering up the sacrifice of prayers, and the keeping of children to read daily some portion of holy Scriptures, as *Jerom* counselled *Læta* [*Reddat tibi pensum quotidie de Scripturarum floribus carptum*] Let thy childe give thee a daily account of some choice flowers cropt out of the Bible.

Hieron Tom. 1. p. 57.

Arist Ethic. l. 7. c. 14.

Hieron. p. 57.

8. Endeavour by all good means to draw them to publick ordinances: for there God is in a more especial manner present. *There he hath commanded a blessing and life for evermore:* There he *walketh among his Golden Candlesticks, when the King sitteth at his Table, the Spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof.* He makes the place of his feet to be glorious. Though it were Gods appointment that the males onely should at the solemn feasts repair to *Shilob*; yet *Elkanah* carries up *all his house* to the yearly Sacrifice. He would have his Wife, and Children, and Servants, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his Temple, and you know what a great blessing succeeded upon *Hannah*. *Cornelius* also when *Peter* came to preach at *Cæsarea* upon Gods immediate command, he calls together all his kindred and acquaintants to hear the Sermon. *Jesse* and his Sons came together to the Sacrifice, which *Samuel* offered to the Lord at *Bethlehem*. It is an ungodly wicked custome to leave many Children and Servants at home needlesly upon the Lords Day. Indeed in great and numerous Families, where there are many small Children, that might disturb the Congregation, and where much provision is necessary for such as attend upon God in the duties of Worship, there the case is somewhat altered; for such works of mercy are dispenst with by God himself: But labour to contract the number of absents to the smallest quantity possible, and let Servants take their turns, that none may be alway at home; leave none behinde thee without necessary and urgent cause. As for such as can be present at Ordinances, remember to examine

Psal. 133. 3. Rev. 2. 1. Cant. 1. 12.

1 Sam. 1. 21.

Acts 10. 24.

1 Sam. 16. 5.

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them of what they heard, as our bleſſed Lord the grand pattern of our Imitation dealt by his beloved Diſciples, when he had preached that
Mat. 13. 51. famous Sermon by the Sea-ſide, Jeſus asks them, *Have ye underſtood all*
Mar. 4. 34. 9. *thoſe things?* and when they were alone, and apart from the multitude, then he expounded and explained all things that he taught, more fully to them.

9. In the next place, if all theſe things fore-mentioned will not prevail, but inferiours will ſtill run on in a courſe of ſin, then oughteſt thou to repair to paternal correction. Now chaſtiſements muſt be ſuited to their Age, the temperament of their natures, and ſeveral diſpoſitions, the various qualities and kinds of their offences. Indulge a pardon ſooner to leſſer faults upon repentance and ſorrow. You muſt conſider, whether their faults proceed from imprudence and weakneſs, upon what ground and occaſion, upon what provocation or ſeduction. Call to mind their former lives, whether they have fallen ſeldom and rarely, or often and frequently into the ſame ſin. Obſerve whether they appear to be deeply ſorrowful, and truly humbled, and readily beg forgiveneſs of God and you [*cum animo non revertendi*] with a promiſe of a new life. In theſe and the like caſes, you muſt adhibit great diligence and prudence. Due puniſhment is a part of œconomical juſtice, and there muſt be care had, leaſt by frequent impunity they and their fellows be hardned in the wayes of Sin, and grow
Prov. 13. 24. & 23. 14. contumacious againſt the Commandments of God. *He that ſpareth his Rod, hateth his Son; but he that loveth him, chaſteneth him betimes. Thou ſhalt beat him with the Rod, and deliver his ſoul from Hell.* This
Heb. 12. 9. is an Ordinance and Appointment of God. *Our Fathers corrected us, and we gave them reverence.* But let Superiours remember, that they muſt not do this without good, and without great cauſe, and when all other means will not prevail. If it be poſſible to rule without the rod, 'tis beſt. Happy are thoſe Parents to whom God hath given ſuch towardly Children, that a nod, that a frown, that a wink, will reform them. Certainly the wiſdome of Parents might do much this way at firſt. If their Children be of any tollerable frames, that the holding up of a finger may excuſe the holding up the rod. It preſerves, and indears the affections of Children exceedingly. That of the *Tragedian* is a good Maxime in œconomicks; *Qui vult regnare diu, languidâ regnet manu.* Durable power is fixed upon gentle management. Take
Ephes. 6. 4. heed of exaſperating, and *provoking* your *children to wrath*, by rigid and ſevere courſes, where leſs may effect your purpoſe, and that more kindly. There be ſome cruel Parents and Maſters, that carry themſelves

ſelves more like raging Brutes, than Men, that take pleaſure in tyrannical Corrections. They can let their children ſwear, and lye, and filch, and commit any other ſin, and yet correct them not; but if they do not what they would have them, then they fall upon them, and tear them like wild Beaſts: Know, that God will require ſuch vile acts at your hands in the great day. O rather let them ſee that thou art angry for Gods ſake, and not for thine own. There muſt be a great deal of gracious pity to their ſouls, and holy love mixt with thine anger againſt ſin. O how few be there that beg in ſecret, that God would ſoften the hearts of their relations by their due and moderate caſtigations! Oh pray, that God would lay his holy hand upon their hearts, when thou layeſt thy Rod upon their backs. After they have paid their debt to Juſtice, look more ſerene upon them, and thereby incourage them to amendment. Moroſity and acerbity (*σκυθρότης*) if continuing ſtill, will check their hopes of ever returning to thy grace and favour. Let ancient Rulers have a care of too much ſowreneſs of carriage; for many times through the common incidencies of age, the Philoſopher hath obſerved that they are too proclive to jealouſies, ſuſpicions [*ὅτι τὸ χεῖρον ὑπολαμβάνουσι ἅπαντα*] to interpret all things in the worſt ſenſe, and ſo poſſibly to be too quick and ready upon caſie ſuggeſtions, to think of, and deal hardly with their Inferiours: Be careful to uſe both your ears, and hearken to both parties in matters of complaint. But if upon deliberate and mature conviction, nothing leſs will prevail: Follow Gods command herein, and *thy Son ſhall give reſt unto thy ſoul.* In all theſe caſes there lies a great point of prudence, to let them know, that thou haſt yet greater corrections for them, if they mend not. That the fear and terror of what thou haſt yet reſerved, may work them to a compliance. They that ſhew the utmoſt of their rigor and power in ſuch acts at once, deſpoil themſelves of that authority and awe which otherwiſe they might ingenerate in their hearts: but take heed of all violent and paſſionate corrections. A Heathen could ſay to his ſervant [*Cæderem te niſi iraſcerer*] I would beat thee, were I not angry. He that ſmites when his paſſion boils, is too too ſubject to tranſcend the limits of moderation; vehement anger makes the hands to tremble, that ſuch are not able to ſtrike aright. Take heed leſt thou make thy child or thy ſervant to become vile in thine own eyes, by too many ſtripes. Such perſons plant quick-ſets in the hearts of their children, that may grow up too faſt to prick their own hands, yea their hearts another day.

Ariſt. Ethic. l. 8. c. 6.

Id. in Rhet. l. 2. c. 12.

Prov. 29. 17.

Senec. de ira. l. 1. c. 15.

Deut. 25. 3.

10. If the fore-mentioned means through Divine bleſſing prove effectual,

effectual, then praiſe and encourage them, when they come on though yet but a little. Ingenuous, yea rugged tempers are ſometimes wrought upon by moderate and prudent Enge's. It's ſpoken of God himſelf, that *he will not always chide, nor keep his anger for ever.* As Magiſtrates, ſo Parents muſt be ſometimes praiſers of them that do well: Our Lord comes in ſometimes with, *Well done good and faithful ſervant*: So muſt you, when they are towardly and dutiful [*ἀναπαίδας τοῖς ἐνδόξοις*] call up their ſpirits by commendation. [*Laudibus excitandum eſt ingenium.*] There is a notable virtue in praiſe, eſpecially as to generous ſpirits, to excite and prick them forward to duty, and that principally when divers together, according as deſerts vary, are unequally praiſed, it ſtirs up a virtuous emulation. Only take heed of exceeding too much, for little veſſels can bear no great ſails; pride and arrogancy are many times nurſt up by too exuberant and laviſh expreſſions, and ſometimes an unmannerly familiarity appears.

Pſalm 103. 9. Rom. 13. 3 Mat. 25. 21.

Hier. ad Læt. p. 55.

11. Do they flouriſh and thrive in duty and obedience, and begin to take in precepts freely and kindly, then win them on further by rewards, according to their ſeveral capacities, and the quality of thine own eſtate. God is pleaſed moſt graciouſly to draw and allure us on in the ways of holineſs, by the propoſal of reward: *He is a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him.* I remember that *Jerom*, as to the green years of *Pacatula*, wiſhes her father to uſe theſe means, [*proponantur ei cruſtula, mulſa præmia, & quicquid gnſtu ſuave eſt, quod vernat in floribus, quod rutilat in gemmis, quod blanditur in puppis, aceptura feſtinet, &c. Pſalmos mercede decantet*] give her ſweet-meats, flowers, jewels, babies, to entice her to learn the Pſalms. As to years of further growth, ſuch rewards as become them may be more proper. In ſome caſes theſe have proved great ſpurs and incitations, at leaſt to the outward work of Religion in younger ones. *Hannah* that good Woman brought up a little Coat every year to her Son *Samuel*, when he was in the ſervice of the Lord at the Tabernacle in *Shiloh* under *Eli*. And you know the Father of the Prodigal in the Parable, when his Son returned home to lead a new life, he killed a fatted Calf for him, put the beſt robe upon his back, a ring upon his hand, and ſhooes upon his feet.

Heb. 11. 6. Hieron. Tom. p. 100.

1 Sam. 2. 19.

12. In the laſt place, be exceeding conſcientious and cautelous in diſpoſing them abroad, when either their education or profeſſion requires it. As to the ſchools, when young and tender, chuſe out ſuch Guides and Maſters as may edifie them, and imprint ſomething more

Luke 15. 22.

of

of God upon their hearts. It is a great fault in many that take up any neigbour-ſchool where there are prophane and wicked children, ſuch as have learnt of their parents to ſwear, and take Gods Name in vain: Many times little youths gather a great deal of filth, and ſoil, and pollution in ſuch places, that ſticks by them many years after. It is a good work [ἀπιλαύνειν ἀπὸ τῶν ἀκαθάρτων ἢ τῶν ἐφθάρτων ἀπολαυσθείας] to prohibit and keep them off from all illiberal and ſordid ſpeeches and ſpectacles. There was it ſeems a great crew of naughty children at *Bethel*, in the days of *Elijah*, that mockt the Prophet; a place that was a Seminary and Nurſery for young ones in knowledg. Oh how ſad is it for children that have been diligently taught at home in the fear of God, to unlearn all in wicked ſchools! Have a great Eye to this, and eſpecially if they be ſuch as are deſigned for Academical learning, that they be placed under godly Tutors at the Univerſity; or if for Trades, or other mechanical myſteries, that you chuſe out the bleſſed ſhadow of a godly Maſter and Miſtreſs, that may rivet and clench the nail that thou haſt knockt in. Great will be thy comfort in this, if thou ſoughteſt more a pious family, than a great and rich Trade. A family wherein ſhips go to Heaven, and a Trade is driven to *Canaan*. But eſpecially in the grand concernment of Marriage, that they match into a godly family, in whoſe veins the blood of the Covenant doth run. An Heireſs of the Divine Promiſes is a greater match than Empreſs of the whole world. He that hath but one foot of Land in Mount *Zion*, is richer than he that holds a Scepter over the round Globe.

Arist. Pol. l. 7. c. 17.

2 King. 2. 23. 2 King 2. 3.

I come now to the ſecond branch of this Queſtion, and that is,

Queſt. 2. *By what means we may attain our deſires in reference to a good work in the hearts of thoſe that are our equals, whether of conſanguity, affinity, or neighbourhood?*

Anſw. As to this, I ſhall only propoſe two particular Rules, which I cannot now handle largely.

1. Be diligent in private conference and admonition, as the providence of God ſhall adminiſter ſeaſonable occaſions. *Give attendance to exhortation. Exhorting one another*: Lay before them the weighty and momentous matters of Eternity, and another world. Such things will make deep wounds to be cured in time by the hand of Heaven. Be ſhort and nervous, and lead them off from Carnal diſcourſe by ſome ſweet and heavenly diverſions.

1 Tim. 4. 13. Heb. 10. 25.

2. Manage your Reproofs with great prudence and diſcretion: *Thou ſhalt not hate thy Brother in thy heart; thou ſhalt in any wiſe rebuke thy*

Rev. 19. 17.

thy neighbour, and not ſuffer ſin upon him. I might here divert into a caſe almoſt co-incident, and that is,

Queſt. *When is it our duty to reprove ſuch as we ſee and hear committing of ſin as we paſs by in the ſtreets?*

Anſw. This being the buſineſs of another ſubject, I ſhall onely ſay thus much, that if thou perceiveſt them by their haughty and ſcornful carriage to be ſuch as will kick at rebuke, thou haſt a rule from *Solomon*: *Reprove not a ſcorner, leſt he hate thee.* When by the wiſeſt conjecture that thou canſt make, he is like to ſhew the properties of a brutiſh, ſwiniſh nature; *Caſt not thy Pearls before Swine, leaſt they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rent you.* But if he be a perſon likely to receive impreſſions, and particularly if it be a treſpaſs againſt thy ſelf, go tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he ſhall hear thee, thou haſt gained thy Brother. Debate thy cauſe with thy neighbour himſelf, *Prov.* 25. 9. I have known admirable ſucceſs in this caſe. But in all ſuch caſes obſerve theſe three Directions.

Prov. 25. 11. *Dialog. Laert. in Arceſilao.*

1. Time your Reproofs ſeaſonably; Words ſpoken in ſeaſon *are* like Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver. [ἀυτὸ τῦτο μάλιστα φιλοσοφίας ἴδιον, τὸ καιρὸν ἐπιγνῶναι.] This very point (ſayes an antient) is proper to a Philoſopher to underſtand the ſeaſon of all things. I may ſay, 'tis much more the excellency of a Chriſtian to feel the pulſe of the ſoul, and hit the diſeaſe in the very joynt; as 'tis reported of *Galen*, that when *Antoninus* laboured under a diſtemper, others not being able to declare where it lay, this Phyſitian by his expertneſs in the evidence of Symptomes, pronounced that his ſtomach was vexed with crudities and indigeſtion: The Emperour cried out three times [ἀυτὸ ἔστι, ἀυτὸ τῦτο ὁ λέγεις, ἔστι] That's it, that very thing is it, which thou haſt ſpoken. As to our purpoſe, it is adviſable, ſometimes, not preſently and immediately to fall bluntly upon the work, leaſt thou thy ſelf ſhouldeſt be in a paſſion. Yet ſtay not too long, leaſt thy holy zeal be cooled, and both thou and he forget or diſſemble the Circumſtances, whereby reproof might be the better fixed. A ſeaſonable time to intermeddle in theſe caſes may be when a friend is under the holy hand of God in any affliction, particularly in a ſick-bed. That time which is fit for bodily, may be much more fit for ſoul-phyſick. When thoughts of mortality, and the leaving of all outward enjoyments do prepare and meliorate the way for ſpiritual impreſſions.

Caſtellan. de vit. medic. p. 117.

2. Mix thy reproofs with meek and gentle Expreſſions. Every reproof ſhould be like the *Syrupus Acetoſus* of Phyſitians, the Syrup of Vinegar,

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Vinegar, that carries with it a grateful ſharpneſs. Take heed thou go not to this work veſted in thine own anger; for though there may be in thee ſome holy zeal, yet take heed of mingling too much of kitchen-fire. Meek reproofs are like Tents dipt in the Balm of *Gilead*, that both ſearch and cure the wound together. *Let the Righteous ſmite me*, (ſayes *David*) *and it ſhall be a kindneſs; and let him reprove me, it ſhall be an excellent Oyl, which ſhall not break my Head.* Such are the Diſciples of the good *Samaritan*, who poured in wine as an abſterſive, and oyl as a ſuppling incarnative into the wound. Such are the children of that prudent Matron, *who opened her mouth in wiſdome, and in whoſe tongue was the Law of kindneſs.* And yet, friends, if we be over-gentle, the core of the wound will remain. The Chirurgion, who hath taught his Fingers too much tenderneſs, and not willing to put his Patient to pain, may, through cruel kindneſs, occaſion diſtorted limbs and lameneſs all a mans life. Corroſives are as neceſſary as glutinous plaiſters, to eat down the proud Fleſh of our ſinful ſores. *Eli*'s ſinful mildneſs procured the ſharp ſword of the *Philiſtines* to cut off his Sons, and occaſioned ſuch diſmal events, that broke his own heart, and his neck too. In many Chymical operations, Salt is a moſt neceſſary ingredient, and cauſes things to ferment; without the ſalt of reproof in its due proportion, bare words of advice will ſeldom work. The temper of the perſon muſt be wiſely conſidered. In ſome, too mild expreſſions lull them aſleep in ſin. No great matter (may they think) which extorts but ſuch gentle reflections. In others, that are quick and apprehenſive: *Soft words do pacifie wrath.* Such as are of cholerick tempers, whoſe gall doth much overflow their inteſtines, Phyſicians are more careful (of their *Cholagôga*) of ſuch ingredients in their Purges that may exonerate, and not augment their choler. In all thy ſpiritual Phyſick, labour to clear it up, that thou giveſt no potion but what may tend to the health of his ſoul.

Pſal. 141. 5. Luk. 10. 34. Prov. 31. 26. Prov. 15. 1.

3. Be ſure thou be unblameable as to that which thou reproveſt in another. If thou doeſt the ſame things, for which thou rebukeſt thy Brother, *thou art inexcuſable, for wherein thou judgeſt another, thou condemneſt thy ſelf.* He may well retort the Proverb upon thee, Phyſician heal thy ſelf. *Caſt out firſt the beam in thine own Eye, and then ſhalt thou ſee clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy Brothers Eye.* This is the firſt and principal work [σαυτὸν πῶσαι καὶ ὕστω τίνωσκε, εἶτα μοι τὸν ἐπιχειρεῖς πείθειν τὸν ἄλλον] to perſwade thy ſelf. Doeſt thou attempt to perſwade others to that, whereunto thou art not arrived thy ſelf? O vain man! who will believe that thou art in good earneſt, *that thou*

Rom. 2. 1. Luke 6. 42. *Arrian. in Epictet. l. 4. c. 6.*

Rom. 2. *doeſt* indeed *abhor Idols, whereas thou committeſt Sacrilcdge.*

Obj. But ſome may object, *Shall we never reprove others in any caſe, till we are clear our ſelves; then who can perform this duty?*

Anſw. I anſwer: As to ſcandalous, and ſuch as groſly foul the converſation; a man through Grace may keep himſelf unſpotted from the world. But in matters of infirmity, who can ſay that his heart or his life is free and clean. In the former, when thou haſt waſhed thy hands in innocency, then mayeſt thou deal with thy Brother. In the latter, ſince in many things we offend all, involve thy ſelf in the ſame reproof, and it may be digeſted the more kindly.

James 1. 27.

James 3. 2.

I come now to the third and laſt branch of the Queſtion, and that is,

Queſt. 3. *How ſhall we deal with Superiours, in caſe ſuch are in the ſtate of Nature? By what means may we moſt effectually promote their converſion?*

1. Here I might inlarge by way of Preface, to ſhew that it is lawful in ſome caſes for Inferiours to deal with Superiours, though it be the moſt difficult task.

2. That it is not onely lawful, but ſometimes neceſſary. For it may ſo fall out, that in a whole family there may be but one child, or one ſervant that truly fears God, as it was with *Joſeph* in the houſe of *Potiphar*. What ſhall he do, that would fain win a Father, a Maſter, or any other Superiour unto God? As to this, I ſhall give in but two directions at preſent.

A. 1. Exhibit thy counſel, advice, or reproof, under the vails of ſimi-

Diog. Laert. in Zeno p. 445. Edit. Genev. 1615. litudes, examples, or hiſtories. *Diogenes Laert.* in the life of *Zeno* acquaints us [εἰδὲ τινα ὀνειδίσοι, παρεσκωψεν ἐ ἐν ἀδυ, ἀλλὰ πόρρωθεν] that if he did reprehend any, he did it ſuccinctly, not profuſely, but *at ſome diſtance*. It is a good Rule as to Superiours. It is an elegant and a profitable way for managing this neceſſary duty, though uſually ineffectual and ſucceſsleſs, for want of vigilant circumſpection and prudence. If thy Father be ungodly and unholy, recite ſome hiſtory out of the Bible, or out of Church-writers, that may have a ſweet reflexion upon thy Fathers way. Sometimes Parables and Proverbial ſpeeches that are modeſt and ſober, may hit the joint. He may vouchſafe to behold his face in the glaſs, who would ſtorm at direct reproof. Parents many times when they are hit thus meekly and modeſtly, if they be wiſe, will ſeem to take no notice, but may ponder upon it a

Luke 2. 51. great while after. As our Lord when he told his Parents that he was about his Fathers buſineſs, the Text ſayes, that *Mary kept all thoſe ſayings*

sayings in her heart. This is drawing the Bow, as it may seem to the superiour, many times at an adventure; yet may thine Arrow hap to pierce even within the joynts of the harness. Parables are feigned examples, and are [ὅμοια ἐπαγωγή] near a kin to Inductions. Such was the great wisdom of *Æsop* and *Stesichorus* in their dayes, as the Philosopher notes. Such was the Parable of *Jotham* to the men of *Shechem*. Thus *Nathan* dealt with *David*, and our blessed Lord himself after this manner many times handled the High Priests and Rulers of the people; he reproved them sometimes in dark sentences, and chosen Parables. But if Superiours be over-morose, and exceeding sagacious, and highly magisterial, then a disapproving silence, a dis-relishing look, as speedy a departure out of their presence as may stand with the necessary detentions of thy duty [ἀναστῆναι, ἢ ἐμπεδῆσαι ἢ συνδραμεῖν ἁπλῶς μᾶλλον συγκλείειν τὸν λόγον.] a holy blush for them that are shameless in sin, may do greater things than thou art aware of.

Aristot. Rhet. l. 2 c. 20. Judg. 9. 7, &c. 2 Sam. 12. 1, &c. 2 Thes. 3. 14. *Epictet. c. 55.*

2. Manage all your discourses with reverent expressions and compellations. If it be a great part of common humanity [προσαγορεύειν καὶ χαιρετίζειν] to salute courteously those that we meet: what dexterous affability, and most sweet lowly demeanour should we exert and put forth to those above us? *Paul* in his conference with *Porcius Festus* salutes him with great respect. *Most Noble Festus*, I speak the words of truth and soberness. Grace expells not the due distance of Nature. *Rebuke not an Elder*, sayes the Apostle, *but intreat him as a Father*, that he may see thou desirest and longest, that he may be begotten to God. Mark how *Naamans* servants treated their Master, with what submissive reverence did they bespeak him in that matter of his washing in *Jordan*. *My Father*, If the Prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it, &c.? *Abraham* hearkened you know to the voice of his Wife, at the command of God, in the case of *Hagar*, and the spirit of God takes notice of the temper of *Sarah*, and commends her for it, that she called her husband *Lord*. And that I may give an instance in all three relations, if we consult the circumstances of the Text, we shall finde it probable, that *Terah* the Father, hearkened to *Abraham* his Son, as to his departure out of an *Idolatrous* Country. For the voice of God came to *Abraham* alone, bidding him to go out of *Ur* of the *Chaldees*, to a land that he would shew him. *Nebuchadnezzar*, that great and mighty Monarch, did not reject that pious and savoury counsel which was given him by *Daniel* his captive-servant within his Palace. *Job* likewise a man of great

Diog. Laert. in Platon. p. 245. Act. 26. 25. 1 Tim. 5. 1. 2 King. 5. 13. Gen. 21. 12. 1 Pet. 3. 6. Gen. 11. 31. & 12. 1. Josh. 24. 2. Dan. 4. 27.

Job 31. 13. poſſeſſions in the Eaſt, *did not deſpiſe the cauſe of his Man-ſervant or his Maid ſervant, when they contended with him.* Humble, modeſt, and reverent behaviour may have notable influence into Superiours. It is *Senec. de Benefic. l. 3. c. 35.* controverted by *Seneca*, whether or no a childe may not heap greater benefits upon a Father, than he had received from him. It may be clearly ſtated in the Affirmative; if he ſhould be a means of turning him unto God. The Father begets his Son to a miſerable and mortal life: The Son begets his Father to that life which is Glorious and Eternal.

There remain yet four general Directions reſpecting all Relations.

1. Inſinuate thy ſelf into their affections. Let them know, that thou haſt no deſign upon them, but to make them happy. Indeavour to perſwade them that thou haſt no private end, onely their everlaſting good. Winde into their hearts, ſcrew thy ſelf into their affections, *Max. Tyr. diſſert. 10. Ed. Heinſ. 1607.* and thou haſt done half thy work. [ὁ δ' ἔρως ἀδεσπότως ἔτως πολεμῶ ὡς ἀνάγκη καὶ δέος] Nothing ſo inimical to love as fear and neceſſity. When all jealouſies of any ſiniſter ends are blown away, then exhortations and counſels go down comfortably. When perſons are convinced and ſatisfied that in all our Applications we ſtudy their benefit and profit, this opens an effectual door to all the means that we ſhall Rom. 1. 11. uſe. Thus the Apoſtle accoſts the *Romans*, *I long to ſee you, that I may impart unto you ſome Spiritual gift.* Thus he facilitates his way to the Phil. 1. 8. *Philippians.* God is my record, *how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jeſus Chriſt*, *Simplicius in Epictet. c. 38. p. 217. Edit. Salm.* [τὰς τὸ δοκῶν συμφέρον ποιέζοντας ἐκείνους καὶ τιμᾶν καὶ αἰδεῖσθαι πεφύκαμεν] we do even naturally reſpect and reverence ſuch as bring that which appears profitable to us; eſpecially when Supetiours carry themſelves with courteouſneſs and kindneſs. For moſt men delight to be honoured and eſteemed by them that are above them [διὰ τὴν *Ariſt. Ethic. l. 8 c. 8.* ἐλπίδα] for the hope that they conceive of ſome ſpecial profit to be received from them. The caſe varies not in ſpiritual matters. Labour then to gain their love, their good eſteem, and the work will thrive beyond expectation.

2. Study to convince them by rational Arguments [ἡ πειθὼ συζυγία *Max. Tyr. diſſ. 10.* ἔρωτος καὶ λόγου] Perſwaſion is the daughter of love and reaſon. Our affections indeed moſt times are firſt wrought upon, we are ſo ſenſual by nature. When thou art once gotten into their hearts, then preſs them with weighty Arguments drawn out of Scripture; argue with them about the folly of ſin. See how *Job* handles the matter with his wife Job 2. 10. about murmuring and impatience againſt God. *What? ſhall we receive good at the hand of God, and not evil?* Let them know that all the

wayes

ways of God are pleasant ways, and all his paths are peace. That the path to heaven is a most sweet path to walk in. Shew them the beauty of Christ, the glory of Christ, draw aside the curtain, and unvail the mysteries of free-grace before their Eyes. Let them behold the image of that blessed Saviour pourtrayed in Scripture. As the spouse did to the Daughter of *Jerusalem*, run over all the excellencies of Christ, and then conclude, *He is altogether lovely. This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend, O Daughters of Jerusalem.* Tell them what experience you had of the blindness, nakedness, miserableness of your own condition formerly, when you were as they are now; that you then thought of Religion, as they do; that it was but a peevish, foolish, unnecessary strictness. Tell them how the case is mended with you, how admirably through mercy 'tis altered. Prov. 3. 17. Cant. 5. 16.

3. Let your conversation be very exemplary; so that what you perswade, may be strongly confirmed by your own example. Both vice and vertue are learned by Presidents. *Alexander* in his manners and gate did imitate his Master *Leonides*, as long as he lived. [*Nihil in te & in patre suo videat, quod si fecerit peccet*] Let thy child behold no thing in thy walking, which, if followed, may prove sinful. Be an example to others of holiness, that they may not offend by the authority of thy Name. Though thy precepts be short and concise, let thine actions, exemplifying those precepts, be constant and perpetual. Deny your selves sometimes in the injoyment of Lawful things, which may not be expedient before Carnal Relations, when you are upon this work. Let *wives*, says the Apostle *Peter*, *win* their Husbands by *their* holy *conversation*. Walk so meekly, so obediently, so winningly by an amiable deportment, that a wicked drunken husband may see the picture of grace in the life of a wife, and may be forced to confess, that grace of a truth dwelleth in her. Many times the unbelieving husband may be saved, even in this sense by the believing wife, *& vice versâ*. *David* profest that he would *walk in his house with a perfect heart*. As the water follows the finger in the clay: so may thy example lead them on to the things of God. There is a secret reverence and awe upon the hearts of others, when any in the family do walk worthy of the Gospel unto all well-pleasing. *Hieron. ad p. 56, 57.* *Id. P. 101.* *Max. Tyr. diss. 15.* 1 Pet. 3. 1, 2. 1 Cor. 7. 16. Psal. 101. 2.

Fourthly and lastly, After thou hast used all these fore-mentioned directions (which lye couched in the bowels of these words in the Text [*my hearts desire is, that Israel may be saved*] For if he did heartily desire their good, as he profest, then he would use all good means proper and proportionable to that end. But then he adds

his

his prayer to God for the ſame purpoſe, and ſo muſt thou) follow the example of our holy Apoſtle; Alas, all thy inſtructions without prayer will do no good. Go to God to ſanctifie all, and to perſwade their ſouls that you have a moſt ſingle and ſincere aim at their everlaſting ſalvation. Pray apart for them, and if the condition of thy Relations will admit, pray with them, and therein touch ſome ſweet reflections upon their ſouls. *Elijah* when he was in prayer with company, cries
1 King. 18. 37. out, *O Lord hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God.* Our bleſſed Lord alſo in that heavenly prayer to the Father,
Joh. 17. 20. & 18. 1. makes moſt ſweet and ardent mention of his Diſciples who were preſent with him. *Job*, he ſacrificed for his children, he ſent for them,
Job 1. 5. and ſanctified them, and *offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all*; To teach us to pray for children diſtinctly one by one. *Abraham* he begs of God, *Oh that Iſhmael may live in thy ſight*, and
Gen. 17. 18. Prov. 31. 2. *Bathſheba* ſhe calls *Solomon the Son of her Vows*. *Auſtin* was the child of *Monica*'s prayers and tears. Ask counſel of God as *Ma-*
Judg. 13. 8. *noah* did, that he would be pleaſed *to teach you* what you muſt do with your children. Beg of God wiſdom and direction, that he would order providential ſeaſons for their good; let that be your great requeſt in ſecret; Oh that ſuch a child, ſuch a ſervant, might be *pull'd* as a fire-
Jude 23. brand *out of the fire*, and brought home to God. Should you have the wiſdom of Angels, if God do not come in to your help, all your labour will be in vain. Cry out with the poor man in the Goſpel, *Lord*
Mat. 17. 15. *have mercy on my Son*, for he is ſore vexed; for oft-times he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water, ſometimes into one ſin, ſometimes into another, whereby his ſoul incurs fearful and terrible dangers. Commend thy child to God, whom thou haſt begotten to death and damnation, unleſs wonderful mercy interpoſe it ſelf. Sprinkle him with the holy waters of melting tears, beg of God that he may be delivered from the wrath to come by his Almighty Arm. Petition earneſtly for the pardon of thoſe ſins, for the rooting out that ſpiritual wickedneſs, which thou haſt been the means to propagate. Pray it out, faſt it out, weep it out before God. Such Devils go not out without faſting and prayer.

Now I ſhall make ſome brief Application of the whole, and ſo conclude.

Uſe 1. In the firſt place, hence we learn the diffuſive nature of ho-
2 King. 4. 3. lineſs; it is like the widows oyl, that filled all the veſſels of her neighbours. He that is holy, is ἀναδοτικὸς, like unto God himſelf for communicativeneſs, as well as for purity in his ſmall degree and meaſure; The

language

language of a Saint is, *Come, let us* ſing praiſe, *let us* come before his preſence with thankſgiving, *Come ye*, and *let us* go up to the Mountain of the Lord, to the houſe of the God of *Jacob*, and he will teach us of his ways, *&c.* Pſal. 95. 1, 2. Iſa. 2. 3.

Uſe 2. To reprove ſuch as do not perform their utmoſt, that do not improve their skill and endeavour to the height in this excellent work. Every child is born an heir of Hell, and wilt thou uſe no means to deliver his ſoul from death, and to pull him out of the jaws of the Devil? Oh thou ungodly Father, that like *Gallio*, takeſt no care in this matter, God will require the blood of thy child, and the blood of thy ſervant at thy hands one day. Doſt thou love thy child? a Heathen will teach thee thy duty, To love, ſaith he, is [*βέλεσθαι ἀγαθα ϗ τὰ κατὰ δύναμιν αὐτῷ παρεκτικὸν εἶναι*] to deſire good things for ſuch, and according to the utmoſt ability to endeavour to accompliſh them. There is but one good thing that is abſolutely neceſſary for thy child, and that is, a happy union to God. What haſt thou yet done to the effecting of that? Many are eagerly bent upon thoſe deſigns, how their children, like *Caligula* in the Hiſtorian, may tumble in a room full of gold, but take little pains for the gold of *Ophir*, and that *wiſdom* which is *far above Rubies*. Know, that all the ſins of relations under your charge that are not reproved and corrected for, will become yours. Every drunken fit of thy ſervant will be counted thine to anſwer for. Every turn of pleaſure that thy children and ſervants take in the fields upon Gods holy day, with thy approving connivance, will turn to thy account at the great Tribunal. If thou wouldſt find favour with God, labour to divert them from the ways that lead to the chambers of death. He that neglects his duty herein, does what in him lyes to damn his child and himſelf too. As if he were in league with death, in covenant with Satan, and with Hell were at an agreement; as if it were a laughing matter for himſelf, and all his Relations to fall into the bottomleſs pit of fire and brimſtone. Oh how many families are the filthy cages of unclean birds, like ſo many hog-ſtyes and ſinks of all manner of abominations! We can ſcarce walk the ſtreets, but we ſhall hear ſwearing and curſing, and polluting Gods holy Name, and many obſcene and filthy ſpeeches, and ſee great wickedneſs committed, even by young ſtriplings; and this is becauſe they are not inſtructed and taught the fear of the Lord at home by their Parents and Rulers. There be many ruffling Gallants in our times, that look upon holineſs as a crime, and count it their bravery to go towards Hell with open mouth, with a full ſwinge, that ſwim down the Rivers of Riot and Luxury into the dead Sea. That are ſo far from reproving

Ariſt. Ethic. l. 2. c. 4.

Sutton. in Cal. c. 42.

Prov. 3, 14, 15.

Iſa. 58. 13.

Iſa. 28. 15.

2 Pet. 2. 13, 3.

reproving others for ſin, that they commend and incourage them rather, that have much ado to bear with ſervants that perform excellent
1 Pet. 4. 4. ſervice, if they will not drink healths, and be debaucht as well as themſelves, more like *Nero* than *Chriſtians*. If their children ſerve Satan
Sueton. in Neron. c. 5. never ſo much, they matter it not; ſo they do not ruine their Patrimony. No wonder that their children be profligate and vile, that have ſuch ſad Examples. The ſpirit of God takes notice, that *Ahaziah* was
2 Chron. 22. 3. a wicked man, and gives this for the reaſon; His Mother was his counſellor to do wickedly. Such as will be angry rather, if their Relations
Ælian. de animal l. 5. c. 16. do not walk in the wayes of ſin, like the Waſps, in the Naturaliſt, that dip their ſtings in the poyſon of Vipers. Their angry tongues are
Rom. 3. 13. tinctured in the venome of ſin. Oh how much good might a *Theophilus* do! when greatneſs and holineſs run in a blood, how would the Generations to come riſe up and bleſs them? how much honour might they bring to God? how would Religion flouriſh? how would our fields bring forth peace, and our ſtreets run down with rivers of righteouſneſs?

3. Hence we learn the horrible ſin of ſuch that cauſe others to do wickedly, that egge on others to the commiſſion of ſin, that encourage children to prophane the Sabbath, to lye, and ſwear, and ſeem to ap-
Rom. 1. 32. prove of, delight and rejoyce in it. *Who knowing the judgment of God (that they which commit ſuch things are worthy of death) not only do the ſame, but have pleaſure in them that do them.*

4. Hence we may infer, what great wiſdom is requiſite in managing thoſe means that are proper and uſeful in order to the ſalvation of our Relations, what integrity of heart, what ſincerity, what holy contempt of the ſcorns of this wicked world. Doſt thou take upon thee the ſtudy
Epictet. c. 29. of wiſdom, ſayes the *Stoick*, prepare thy ſelf ſpeedily [ἵνα καταγελασθῇς, to be laught to ſcorn] and expect that many ſhould mock at thee? how much greater is the depravation of mens hearts ſince the fall in oppoſition to true holineſs. Many a bitter taunt and ſcoff muſt thou go under, but in wiſdom paſs it by, regard it not, you work for ſouls. One ſoul begotten to God is better than the gaining of whole Kingdomes and Empires.

5. To ſuch as live under holy Rulers and Governours of Familes, that you would highly eſteem them for their labour of love; that you would count it a ſingular mercy that God hath given any of you a holy Father, or a holy Mother, ſuch as have ſpent many an hour in ſecret for thy good, that have ſought it earneſtly at the Throne of Grace, that thy life might be hid with God in Chriſt. Look upon their inſtructions

ſtructions as ſo many Pearls, their reproofs as ſo many Rubies to wear about thy Neck. Not to be reproved in the way of ſin is a great judgment. To have theſe thorns and briars caſt in the way to our ſinful lovers, is a great mercy. Oh, how many bleſſings do children enjoy by means of praying parents? count it a great and an admirable favour from God. Prov. 1. 9. Hoſ. 2. 6.

6. To ſuch as are imployed and exerciſed in this excellent duty and ſtudy, to perform it conſcientiouſly. Who ſeriouſly endeavour, that their yoke-fellows may be the Spouſes of Chriſt, their poſterity the children of our heavenly Father, their ſervants the freemen of Chriſt, their kindred of the Blood-royal of Heaven. Let me ſay as our bleſſed Lord to *Zacheus*, *This day is ſalvation come to this houſe.* This day haſt thou fellowſhip with the Father and with the Son. The God of Heaven goes along with thee. Though thou doſt not ſee the deſired fruit of thy labour at preſent, do not deſpond, the work is Gods. It is like to ſome of thoſe ſeeds, which ſown in the Earth will not come up, till the ſecond ſpring. The Husband-man *waiteth for the precious fruit* of the Earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. It is often ſeen that there is a mighty power of God going along with ſuch conſtant endeavours; at length the diligent hand may make thee rich. The grace that dwelt in the Grandmother *Lois*, in the Mother *Eunice*, dwelt afterward in their little Son *Timothy*. Though God is not tied by any bond of nature, yet fervent prayer is of a high eſteem in the ſight of God. The uſe of means directed by God, is a hopeful ſign of mercy intended: Where God chuſeth to the end, he ordains to the means. He hath choſen us to be holy, that we might be glorious. However God deal with you in that particular requeſt, yet be ſure your care and pains will not loſe a ſignal reward; your prayers ſhall return into your own boſom, and I tell thee, God watcheth over ſuch a Family in a way of mercy and peace. His Eye of Grace is toward thee; his holy hand will uphold thee; his heart will bleſs thee. Unto his good pleaſure, commit thy ſelf, and wait the ſucceſs; go on and proſper thou bleſſed of the Lord. Jam. 5. 7. 2 Tim. 1. 5. Epheſ. 14. 11.

What are the Characters of a Souls ſincere love to Chriſt? And how may that love to him be kindled and inflamed?

Epheſ. 6. 24.

Grace be with all them, that love our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in ſincerity.

THeſe words may well be treated on without much Preface, there being nothing in them, which ſpeaks any dependance upon, or connexion with any thing that went before. Some form of *Benediction* we find uſed by this *Great* Apoſtle, at the concluſion of every Epiſtle; and accordingly having driven his excellent deſign in *this* to the Church of *Epheſus*, to a full period or iſſue; he firſt makes an affectionate addreſs to God, and to the Mediator in their behalf. *v.* 23. *Grace be to the Brethren, and love with faith from God the Father, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, and then leaves his Apoſtolical benediction upon them, *v.* 24. *Grace be with all them, that love our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in ſincerity*: Or, The bleſſing of the Eternal God be upon all the ſincere hearted Chriſtians among you, for ſo I look upon the latter words of the verſe, as a *Periphraſis* of all real Chriſtians; *Love to Chriſt being as eſſential to the Chriſtian, as the Rational ſoul is to the man*. The only difficulty in the words, that will require our ſtay, is to enquire, what is meant [ἐν ἀφθαρσίᾳ] *in Sincerity*, ſome refer it to the [χάρις] *Grace*, mentioned at the beginning of the verſe, as if it had been read [εἰς ἀφθαρσίαν] *unto Incorruption*, or to bring them to Eternal life, or until they come to a ſtate of Immortality. So many of the Antients, and of the Modern interpreters, *Beza*, *Tremellius*, and others.

Rom. 16. 24. 1 Cor. 16. 23, 24. 2 Ep. 13. 14. Gal. 6. 18.

Others

Others read it, in Conjunction with the *love of the Lord Jesus Christ*, making it a qualification, or a discriminating note of that love, which is *sound, real, and sincere*, from that which is but *pretended, counterfeit, and easie to be corrupted* by every difficulty and temptation; And accordingly they translate, some [*in incorruptione*] others [*absque*] a third sort [*amore non vitiato nec culpato*]. All to the same sense with our English Translation, *In Sincerity*.

There are others who consider this phrase apart by it self; some explaining it by *purity of heart and conversation*, others as denoting thereby the *duration of love* [*tam prosperis quam adversis*, or] both in good and bad times. *Piscator* makes it a distinct branch of the Apostles prayer, as if he had said, *Grace be with all them*, &c. *and life Eternal*; Taking no notice of the prepositon that is added, and varies the Construction. 'Tis the conjecture of a *Learned Divine*, That the Apostle in adding this clause, hath some reflection on the *Gnosticks*, who had mingled themselves with the Christians at *Ephesus*, and were, whatever they pretended, neither pure in their love to Christ, having mixed his Doctrine with abominable corruptions, nor yet sincere and lasting therein, being ready upon every blast of persecution that did arise, to deny him, and Apostatize from him; I shall for the present with *Musculus*, leave the matter indifferent, not only which of the two first, but of all the other fore-mentioned Opinions is fixed upon, finding no cause so far as concerns my present purpose to be peremptory in either. The Apostle doubtless meaning none else *by lovers of Christ*, but such whose hearts were sincerely and intirely affected to him, whether he intended to characterize them any further by [*ἐν ἀφθαρσία, or no*]. which, I presume, might easily be manifested from *other parallel* places (where this grace is mentioned and understood properly, having no additional qualification made thereto); and from the design of the words themselves, for certainly he would not so *solemnly* have intitled the rotten hearted Hypocrites, that did only pretend love to Christ, unto the *Benediction* of the great and blessed God. And if that stand good, we have enough for our purpose, and more, need not be contended for.

1 Cor. 16. 22. Joh. 14. 15, 23 & 21. 15, 17. 1 Pet. 1. 8.

Let this suffice then for their meaning. The subject matter of them, whether you look to the first clause, or the last, is very noble, and might well deserve a large consideration; but I am confined to this single use of them, which is, to make them *the Foundation* of these two cases of Conscience.

What are the genuine Characters of a Souls sincere love to Christ?

And how may that love to him be kindled and inflamed?

And there are but two or three things, that I desire to suggest, and then we shall immediately begin to treat upon them in their order.

1. Let it be considered, that there is a vast difference between these cases, and such others as do refer only to lower duties. When we inquire after the *sincerity of our love to Christ*. It's all one as if we were upon the search, whether we are *Christians*, yea or not; and whether consequently our portion doth lie in the Divine Promises or Threatnings; And what is our *immediate* duty, that all other set aside, we must attend unto? And again, when we seek for directions to help us unto the *love of Christ*, our inquiry is not, how we may order this or that inferiour action, but how we may attain to *saving Religion, and Christianity*; how we may escape the great Damning sin of the world, and intitle our selves to the love of God and Christ, and to all the *rare* priviledges, which belong to the Communion of Saints. In a word, to the *Grace* of God here, and to *Eternal life* hereafter. See 1 *Cor.* 2. 9. *Jam.* 1. 12. and 2. 5. *Job.* 14, 21, 23.

2. Let it be considered, That is not the distinct resolution of *these* cases that will be of *final* advantage to any person, unless thereby added to the former an impartial soul-searching examination of themselves; and to the latter, (as the case shall require) a conscientious practice; The resolutions given to cases of conscience about the right performance of duties, being nothing else, but the bare providing the food or physick; And again, the discoveries of mens states thereby, being but the presenting Looking-glasses to them; neither of which are effectual, or do any good, but to such as faithfully use them.

3. Let me humbly mind you, that the more *uncertainty* you are at, touching your estates, when you have examined them by the *Characters*, the more diligence you are concerned to use in the practice of the *Directions*. And let me add this, That where you cannot *undeniably, and demonstratively* conclude, the sincerity of your love, (which I think few in comparison, on this side of Heaven can) there you must *never* lay by the advice about the last case; no not although your probabilities should be great, it being at the worst but an *easie and sweet trouble* to be still doing this great work over again, whereas its *irrecoverably dangerous and desperate* upon presumption, that we have done it already, to leave it wholly neglected: And I beseech you, remember this *useful Rule*, That in all trials, which Christians make about Grace, *It is safer to want credulity, than to be over hasty therein.*

The cases are two, and very fit to follow each other in the order, that

that is given to them. I begin with the first,

What are the genuine Characters of a souls sincere love to Christ?

And in order to the Resolution thereof, I must premise these several Propositions.

1. *Proposition.*

That there is a great deal of difference between *Love* as it is seated in the *Will, or rational Appetite*, and the same Act or Principle of Love, as seated in the sensitive. In the former, it is a *setled, rational, uniform, and deliberate motion*, co-incident with the very natural act of the will it self; *To Love*, (as the great School-man notes) being nothing else but [*intensive velle*] *to will intensely* either person or thing. The motion of the Will towards the Object, as good and desirable, and the earnest imbracing thereof; this is *rational Love*. And according to the various Aspect which it hath thereto, either as present or absent, perfect or imperfect; it is called *love of desire*, or *fruition, dependance, or complacency*: And if the object be such, as can or doth *reciprocate* affection, then its friendship [or *Amor Amicitiæ.*] But now take *Love*, as it is an *Affection* properly so called, and seated in the lower faculties of the soul, and so there is a great variety and inequality in its motions, much easier to be felt, than expressed; sometimes the soul is in a kind of *extasie*, wrapt above it self; and then by and by it's flat and dull again. I note this first, for this reason, that you may understand what kind of love it is, that our inquiry doth proceed upon, *viz. Rational love*, it being (as a *Judicious Divine* hath often observed) not so safe for Christians to try their states by the passionate motions of Grace in the lower parts of the soul, or the affections, as by the more equal and uniform actings thereof in the will it self; the [τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν] *commandress* of the soul.

Voluntas nihil aliud est, quam Intellectus extensus ad bonum & faciendum id, quod cognoscit. Scalig. *exercit.* 107.

Baxter's Directions for peace and comfort. Direct. 21.

2. *Proposition.*

The Acts of the Will (*in specie morali*) derive their *goodness or viciousness partly* from the nature of the *object*, upon which they are fixed. I do not assert this to be the *onely* ground, whence they are concluded *good or evil*, for *the principle, and the end*, and sometimes *the degree of the act*, are all necessary thereto, but onely that this is *one thing* necessary. Thus the *willing of God*, or any of those things, which are in a direct order to his glory, is that, we call *the Grace of Love*: As on the other side, when the Will moveth towards any thing, which standeth *in opposition* thereto; This is that we call *Sinful concupiscence*.

3. *Propo-*

3. *Proposition.*

It is not barely the *Object* in *it self* considered, but as cloathed with its proper excellencies that agree to it, and all *its necessary Relations*, which the *will* in its motions must have respect unto, before any of those motions can *truly* be said to be *Gracious*: For the nature of Grace lies not in the act or *motion of the will simply* and nakedly considered, but as it's suited and proportioned to the excellencies of the object, and those Relations which do *inseparably* belong thereto. For *instance*, *To delight in God*; It is not every act of delight, which the soul may have upon the apprehension of him; such as a *bare Philosophical conception* of God, may sometimes raise the heart unto: But when the *believing soul*, having taken a view of the Excellencies of God, and its own sweet Relation to him, as a *Gracious Father*, is carried forth in a holy *rapture and exsultancy* of spirit. This is *the Grace of Delight.*

4. *Proposition.*

Though *the love of God, and the love of Christ* are never found one without the other, yet is there a distinction *necessary* to be put between them; and that, even as great in proportion, as is between *God and the Mediatour*, or between *the last thing, and the principal means conducing thereto.* The love of the soul to God is [*Amor finis ultimi*, Or] of such a *Being* as it will be an Eternal happiness *to be united unto.* The love of the soul to Christ, as Mediatour, is [*Amor medii principalis*, or] of one, by whom, we may have *access* to God, and finde our happiness in him. The formal reason of the former, is the *Divine All-sufficiency and Blessedness*, but of the latter the personal excellencies that are in Christ, together with his *ability and willingness* to free us from our undoing straights and exigencies, as we are in a state of *Apostacy and elongation* from God. And (if I mistake not) *the not observing this necessary distinction* between the acts of the soul, as respecting God, and the same acts [*in specie*, or] in kinde, as respecting the Mediatour, hath occasioned much confusion in those answers, which are given to this, and many such like inquiries, such Arguments as are onely proper to the one, being made use of to discover the sincerity of our hearts in the other.

5. *Proposition.*

Love, as it is an act or habit of the will, and hath Christ for its object, is not properly the Evangelical Grace of love to Christ, unless it have respect to him, according to the various excellencies of his person, and the several distinct Relations, which are by God invested in him: Or thus, *The Gospel grace of love, is not the Intensive willing*

willing a naked Christ, but Christ as represented with his peculiar personal Excellencies, and with his various offices and relations unto us in the Gospel. This proposition undeniably follows from the *third* before laid down: But yet, because it gives some *special light* to help us to discover the true nature of this grace; and is intended as the foundation of some of those Characters, that will afterwards come to be insisted on, I must crave *your* patience, while I offer something farther, for the confirmation thereof. That certainly is no *true Moral Act*, which is not suited to the *nature of the object*: Thus, for a man to love *his friend*, no otherwise, than he *loves his beast*, would not be a true Moral act of love? And again, as plain a truth it is, that where the *act of love* doth not bear some *gradual proportion*, to the various excellencies of the object, that it is conversant about; neither can that *Act* have any *Moral truth or goodness* in it: For *instance*, to *love God, or Christ*, with no higher love, than we love inferiour Persons, whether Friends, Relations, or Superiours in the world; This were not *Sincerely* to love either of them. See 1 *John* 2. 15. and *Matthew* 10. 37. and *Luke* 14. 26.----I add in the last place (which is no less evident, than either of the former) that where there are *relations, or Offices necessarily* invested in, and inseparable from the person beloved, then if our love doth not respect the object, as under *those Relations, and offices*, it will be far from being love in Sincerity. Some instances will clear this also beyond contradiction: Suppose a Woman, that hath a Husband, and she loves him no otherwise, than one friend loves another; And the case is the same, between a *Scholler and his Master, a Servant and his Lord, a Subject and his Prince*. If the affections be without reverence, obedience, and loyalty, will either of these be reputed true love? Why, no more are such to be accounted the sincere lovers of Christ, who do not bear *an affection to him, in all his offices and relations*: And this I take to be so demonstrative a truth, and of such necessary consideration in our present inquiry, that nothing could be *spoken in judgment* thereto, untill we had first made our way unto it, and laid it down; I am sure it will be found *fundamental* to the right understanding the *Nature of sincere love to Christ*, and the greatest part of the Characters, which are laid down in the Scripture of this grace. It might now be here expected, and it's almost necessary to give some account of Christs personal excellencies, and also of his offices, what they were, and briefly to intimate what new qualifications each of them would put upon a Christians *Intensive willing* of Christ, which is but the [*Substratum* or] matter of this grace; But I am not now to discourse the nature of this

grace

matter of this grace; But I am not now to discourse the nature of this grace at large, and so much thereof as is necessary, will come in, when we lay down some of the Characters of it, and I have but two things more, and then we come to them,

6. Proposition.

The love of the soul to Christ in sincerity is not any *one Indivisible act or habit*, but a *holy frame of spirit*, made up of *many gracious inclinations*, carrying the *whole* soul along with it *unto Christ*, *for union and communion with him*. I told you in the beginning, that it is used here by the Apostle as the *Periphrasis* of a *Christian*, a *Brother*, a *real Saint*; and therefore it is not a *sudden* and *transient flash* of the soul, or any *one* act, but comprehensive of much of that, wherein the *nature of Christianity* doth essentially lye. This follows necessarily from the last proposition: And indeed to make *faith or love* to Christ, such *single Physical acts*, as many do, as it renders the *Doctrine* of Christianity *perplexed*, so doth it exceedingly tend to the *amusing* of the Conscience of weak Christians, and I am afraid, *Ingender also to licentiousness*: It being too usual with such persons, who presumptuously conceive themselves to be Christians, because they discern, as they think, those supposed particular acts, to take up with them, and to grow remiss, and careless in other duties, as *essential to Christianity*, and necessary to salvation, as those graces themselves. To conclude this proposition, you may note, that as *love to God*, *is the soul of natural piety*, and is *incorporated into* every branch of it, so is *love to Christ the very spirit*, *that diffuseth it self through*, and *animates all those duties*, *which are required by the New Covenant*, *and respect Jesus Christ as Mediator*.

7. Proposition.

When we inquire after this love, by it's *Genuine Characters*, you are not to understand thereby only such *special properties*, as argue the essence of this grace *à posteriori*; but you are to know that we understand it, in such a latitude, as leaving room for all those arguments by which the Conscience of a Christian may be resolved; whether this grace was ever truly wrought in his soul or not. And these things premised, the Characters which evidently discover, *whether we love Christ in sincerity*, *are* these that follow.

1. Character.

Isa. 55. 1. & 61 1, 2, 3. Mat. 11. 28. We may know it by our former *Convictions*, and the Rule is this; *Where love to Christ is sincere*, *there hath been a Conviction of the souls undone condition without him*, *and of the sufficiency*, *and willingness of Christ*

Christ, to recover the soul out of that condition; And where-ever this Conviction hath been fully wrought, and the wound made thereby *Regularly healed*, there dwells Sincere love to him. I put this first, as containing the *original birth of Evangelical love*. I dare affirm, *No conviction, no love*; No contrition of heart for sin, no affection in the soul for Christ? *Every degree of true Spiritual love* (saith a Divine, that had well studied this point) *proceeds from a proportionable Act of saving Faith*. And to the same purpose (saith Dr. *Preston*) and he presseth it earnestly, two things must concur to beget love. 1. The sight of Christs willingness, and readiness to relieve. 2. His ability, and sufficiency to help. These two, willingness, and ability, are the *Crown upon the Head of Christ*, when undone souls do first take delight in him, they are the *sweet Oyntments of our Lord*, which by their *Savour* do attract *Virgin*-souls to betroth themselves unto him. What ever men may vainly talk, 'tis *brokenness of heart, and a sense of approaching Ruine*, that gives the soul the first occasion of acquainting it self in *good earnest* with Christ, and when Faith hath thereupon found the *Suitableness of Christ* to it self, in its present state of misery, then the fire of love begins to burn. So that it is not a blind, casual passion, but a matter *of right Reason*, mature judgement, and choice. It is not a frame of spirit, that persons were delivered into, they know not how, but such, whereof they that have it, can give undeniable reasons, so that if the question were put to any love-sick soul, as to the Spouse in the *Canticles, chap.* 5. 9, 10. *What is thy beloved more than another beloved?* she could give an Account, if not so *Glossie and Rhetorical*, yet *as Logical and Rational* as that, which is there given. She hath seen that in Christ, so much *Excellency* in his person, and so much *readiness and sufficiency*, as resulting from his several offices, which hath even ravished her, and made *him comely to her for delights, yea, the very chiefest of ten thousands*: and therefore she both can, and doth claspe fast about him, and takes him for her *Physitian, Husband, King, Priest, and Prophet*; Since he is willing and *fit to be* my Saviour, (oh! saith the soul) I will be his *Disciple, Servant, Subject or any thing*; Thus he can hold no longer but falls down-right sick of love. And this is the first Character. Take it now, and ask thy soul; *Didst thou ever yet find thy self* lost and undone? not able to bear up against the Terrours of an accusing and condemning conscience; even dying away for fear, lest God should *spend all his arrows* upon thee, and leave thee a *Horrour* to thy self, and an amazement to all about thee? And was it in this *dark Valley*, that thou camest first seriously acquainted with Christ; and

1 Pet. 2. 8.
Cant. 3. 11.
Cant. 1. 3.
Act. 2. 36, 37. & 9. 5, 6. Mat. 9. 12.
Cant. 1. 3. 12. Chap. 2. 3. & 5. 10.
& 2. 5. & 5. 4.
Deut 32. 23. Job 6. 4. Psal. 38. 2.

Jer. 31. 20. Acts 9. 5. didst thou see his *bowels yearning to thee*, and that he was fully able to set thee in the *light of the Countenance of that God*, whose *Terrour was upon thee?* And under this conviction was it, that thou didst first close with him? why this is *love* not in *pretence*, and complement, *but in Sincerity:* Whereas on the other side, if thy pretended affection wants this foundation; if it hath been always alike, neither more, nor less; if that *senseless conceit* runs through thy soul, that thou hast *loved* Christ ever since thou wast born, and never didst feel the least stirrings of Enmity against him; If *Education, Custome, outward communion*, be all that thou hast to say to prove thy love; in faithfulness to thy soul, I warn thee to take heed of self-deceit, for surely *the Root of the matter is not in thee*; and if thou wilt still presume, notwithstanding this confident denial, I have but one word more, and that is to commend to thy serious perusal that Judicious Tract of Mr. *Pinke*, on this very Case, and Text; where these counterfeit grounds of love are *fully convicted of Insufficiency* and therefore I would not do it here again.

See *Reynolds* on Psal. 110. p. 59, 60, &c. Job 19. 28.

Trial of a Christians Sincere love to Christ.

2. *Character.*

Where love to Christ dwells in Sincerity, there hath been some sensible *Impression, Taste, and Feeling of the Fathers love* to the soul in him: I do not mean, the Fathers love, as it lies in the *womb of Election*, but as it hath broken forth in a *powerful actual* Vocation. The pedigree of a Christians love to his Saviour, is to be fetcht from the Fathers love to souls in Christ. 1 *John* 4. 19. *We love him because he loved us first.* Christ himself as Mediatour, is but *a means* whereby Souls may come to God their final end, and blessedness; And therefore as the soul that loves him, loves the *blessed God* much more, so before we can fix upon him with full satisfaction; some *beams* thereof must light upon us, it being too great a difficulty for the soul to prevail with it, to trust all its concernments in the hands of a *Crucified Christ*, and to be found of him, untill it hath gained some sweet assurance of the Fathers love to it self in him. And hence it is that our Saviour tells us; *John* 6. 44. *No man can come to him, except the Father that hath sent him, draw him*, By *coming to Christ*, I take it for granted, may be understood, either *Faith or Love*; And these cannot be without the Fathers drawing, what's that! morally, it lies in the clear discoveries of his willingness to be reconciled to us in Christ; when in Conformity to *his being in Christ reconciling the World to himself*, he is pleased to vouchsafe us his own beseechings of us to be reconciled, then he draws us. The promise therefore of reconcilia-

Rom. 9. 13. Rom. 8. 30. John 14. 6. John 14. 9. & 15. 23. 2 Cor. 5. 20.

reconciliation must first be made known, and by the sweet influence thereof, the soul is allured with Chearfulness to throw it self into the Arms of its Saviour: And this is love. Try by this also; Didst thou ever find those Cords of a man, those bonds of Divine, and Ravishing love, thrown upon thee? Didst thou ever see God to be thy happiness, and offering himself to thee, as such, and so alluring thee? Then thou art Married to Christ, for this speaks thee, *United to God in love*, and the end must include the means, and the greater the lesser.

3. *Character.*

We then love Christ in Sincerity, when that *affection* in us is *qualified* according to the various Excellencies, *that belong to the person of our Lord*; when it respects him, according to the Manifestation made of *him* in the Gospel; *viz* not simply as a person, who is *Historically* made known to us by such a Name; but according to the true Character of him, as *God and man in one person*; [θεάνθρωπος] as One filled with the *spirit of God, above measure, by an ineffable Unction*, as John 3. 35. one admirably Condescending, and laying by his divine splendour and Majesty, that he might appear *in the form of a Servant, and be* Phil. 2. 6, 7, 8. *obedient to the death of the Cross*, for the Salvation of Sinners: and lastly, as one *raised from the dead by God*, made able, and declaring Acts 5. 30. his high satisfaction in the access of sinners unto God by him; And so there are these four graces, which are always attendant upon, and are, (as it were,) *Incorporated* into the nature of this Evangelical affection. 1. *Humble and Reverent admiration*; 'Tis an *admiring Love*. Objects that are incomparably Excellent, do always first affect with admiration; and though that affection dissolve into love, yet doth it not usually wholly cease, especially if the *object* be not throughly Comprehended: 'Tis thus with thy soul (Christian) that art a sincere lover of thy Redeemer, and hast not set up some *Image, of an ordinary person*, in the place of him, thou *admirest him*, whom thou Cant. 5. 16. Eph. 3. 17. lovest, as never being able to comprehend his Glory: The Lord whom thou lovest being *God as well as Man*, and Man as well as John 1. 1. 14. God, and all this, in one person: An object in whom Heaven and 1 Tim. 3. 16. Earth are so *admirably blended* together, that the acutest reason loseth it self, and stands amazed at the Union, whence we find one of the Ancients thus speaking of it, *I know that the Word was made flesh, but how or in what manner this was done, I know not; Dost thou wonder, that I profess my Ignorance; why, the whole Creation is Ignorant of it as well as I*: And another of them gives this advice; If Reason go about Chrysostom.

Justin Mart. to cavil? [πρόφασις (Ἔλεγεν λόγον) τὴν πίστιν.] Do not dispute, but apply thy self to the common Refuge against cavils in matters of Faith, even *Faith it self*: God hath said it, and therefore I must and will believe it; These things considered, I dare boldly tell thee, that thou canst not love in sincerity, but together therewith thou wilt be under a holy *rapture* of Admiration, and together with thy love, thy Admiration will be always increasing.

Cant. 2. 3. 2. *Sweet and refreshing delight.* 'Tis a *delighting, rejoycing love:* love (saith *Aquinas*) [*est complacentia amantis in amato*] is the *rest and satisfaction* of the soul in the Object loved; the nature of love lies much in delight. Thou canst not (Christian) love thy Lord, but thou wilt find thy heart even ravished with delight in him; as being one in whom the

Col 2. 9. *fulness of the Godhead dwells* [σωματικῶς, or] personally [*non per efficaciam in solum aut assistentiam, sed per Unionem Hypostaticam*, or] not vertually, or only in a way of *external* help and assistance; and being also one that

Davenant locum. has such an *Unction of the Spirit upon him*, that hath fully fitted him for

Cant. 4. 15. the delight of thy soul: And hence it is, that we find the Spouse in the Book of *Canticles* so often letting forth her heart in holy delight to her Beloved, as is manifest by her many loving compellations, and several other expressions (*He shall lye all night betwixt my breasts*, Cant. 1. 13) too large and many to be mentioned here, and therefore I refer you to the Book it self.

3. *Ingenuous gratitude and thankfulness.* 'Tis a grateful and *thankful love*; as that which is *begotten* in the soul by the sense of Christs unspeakable goodness, and condescension, and which is also ever after *fed and maintained* thereby. Now the condescension of Christ lies in three things.

Rom. 5. 8. 1. In his *voluntary undertaking the work of Reconciliation*, and mediation with God for persons so unworthy, *Heb.* 2. 16. *He took not on him the nature of Angels, but the seed of Abraham*; it was the cause of sinners, which this great Lord undertook to plead.

2. *In his unwearied diligence, and invincible patience* in fulfilling the *severe* Law of Redemption, which he had submitted to: Though the injury that was done him by man was so great and manifest, and the terrour of the Lord against him also so severe and unspeakable, *yet he opened not his mouth, but was dumb, even as a Lamb at the slaughter, and as a Sheep under the*

Mat. 11. 30. *hands of the Shearers*, Isa. 53. 7.

Rom. 10. 8, 9, 10. *Isa.* 1. 16, 17, 18. 3. *In being willing to communicate the benefits* purchased thereby to sinful and rebellious men, upon such *easie* Terms; bidding us do nothing else but *turn to God by repentance*, and Self-denial, and believe in himself,

and

and then what ever our ſins had been, all the advantages *merited* by his death ſhould be made over to us. Now when all theſe are conſidered (as by every ſoul that ſincerely loves him, more or leſs they are) do they not ſweetly affect with thankfulneſs, as well as love? Chriſtian, canſt thou look upon *ſuch a Redeemer* without ſome ſenſe of an obligation laid upon thy ſoul thereby? wilt thou think one ſingle and ſeparate affection enough for him? or rather, will not thy heart empty it ſelf into the boſom of the Lord with love and thankfulneſs both at once, and each of them contending which ſhall out-do the other?

4. *Supporting hope and confidence*; 'Tis a *hoping and confiding love*; 'Tis not a languiſhing affection, but that which brings life into the ſoul from the fulneſs of that Chriſt it feeds upon. *Perfect love* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *caſteth out fear*. There will not be ſo much as *the ſhadow* of fear upon the ſoul, when this affection is ripened into perfect fruition: And in the mean time, as the degrees of it do increaſe, ſo is the ſoul heightned in its hopes, and tramples upon its former jealouſies, fears, and diſcouragements. And to this ſenſe ſome interpret thoſe words, *Rom.* 8. 38, 39. *Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt? &c.* As if they were the exultation of Faith upon the view of Loves Conqueſt, and victorious Triumph over all its enemies: Love gives confidence of acceſs to Chriſt, and unto God by him; and this confidence lies in the ſoul, as a cordial againſt all its faintings and deſpondencies; not that there may not be a ſinking of ſpirits, and a *ſwooning away* for a time, but love will reſtore the ſoul again, and knowing Chriſt to *be good*, as well as *all ſufficient* for its condition, it will recover life and ſpirits again, and not ſuffer it utterly to faint under its own *ſad* apprehenſions. And this is the third Character. Take now all theſe four qualifications of ſincere love, and try your ſelves by them.

1 Joh. 4. 17.

Cant. 6. 12, 13.

4. *Character.*

If our love be ſincere, its an affection, which reſpecteth not a *naked Chriſt*, *but Chriſt as Mediator*: Or, it is a hearty deſire of, and complacency in Chriſt in all his Offices, as *King*, *and Prieſt*, *and Prophet*: And of ſuch moment is the right knowledg of this Character, that (Chriſtian) I muſt deſire thee principally to ſtudy it, and paſs a judgment upon thy ſelf thereby: For whatever *fondneſs*, and ſudden *flaſhings* of love thou mayſt find within thee, they will not ſo clearly tell thee what thou art, as the knowledg of thy ſelf by this mark. Take it for a clear Truth, *That if thou loveſt not Chriſt as thy Soveraign Lord; if thy heart be not knit to him, as thy High Prieſt with God; if thou haſt not affectionately*

affectionately entertained him as thy Master and Teacher: In a word, if thou art not consecrated unto God by Christ, if thou art not a loyal subject, and a willing Disciple, love in sincerity doth not dwell in thee: Thou art still an enemy, and wilt so be judged; 'Tis not fondness of expression, nor any outward complement that men put upon Christ, which teacheth the *New Testament notion of love to Christ*, but when as loyal subjects, and willing disciples, we are always doing the Things that
Joh. 14 15, 21 & 15. 8 & 10. 21, 23, 24. 1 Joh. 5. 3. Luke 19. 27. Heb. 10. 28. Joh. 14. 23, 24
are *grateful, and are obedient* to him: This is love. And hence it is, that in so many places, our Lord puts us upon trying our *love* by our *obedience*, by *keeping his words and Commandments*. And speaks of *Libertines, Infidels, the carnally wise*, Rebels and Apostates, as enemies, and haters of him, what-ever their pretences are to the contrary. And verily, so essential is this to sincere love, that unless you understand it, you will be able to give but a lame account of most of the Scripture-Characters thereof (as if I had time, I could easily demonstrate) because they do all presuppose it. If thou wouldst know therefore whether this Grace be in thee in truth, take thy heart (Christian) to Christ in every office, and try by such *Interrogatories*, as may result from the consideration of them; and this will tell thee thy case distinctly. Begin *first* with Christ as High Priest (for this did lay the foundation of the other two offices; and if thou hast any love to Christ in sincerity, it was the sight of him in this, that first kindled it). And thus bespeak thy self: Didst thou ever (oh my soul) seriously consider, what Christ hath undertaken in thy behalf with the jealous God, whose face thou couldst not see, and live? wast thou ever convinced, that all thy prayers, duties, outward priviledges, and devotions were little worth,
Heb. 10. 10, 12 1 Cor. 2. 2.
and could not have ought availed thee, unless by his own *blood he* had first *entred within the vail*, and made attonement for thee? And then with the same blood went afterwards *to the right hand of God*, and put him in mind of his Covenant, to procure actual Grace, and Peace, and Adoption for thee? And is it a pleasure to thee, as well as thy admiration, to be always musing, and searching what such an Abysse of grace and goodness should mean? And in the midst of thy musings was it, that thy affections first took this holy fire, and were even surprized into love? Is it by his Mediation that thou findest thy expectaRom. 8. 34. Phil. 3. 7, 8.
tions from God, and thy delight in him supported? And dost thou rejoyce in him, as one whose goodness thou adorest, and whose favour with God, purchased by his own merit, thou admirest? And therefore art most willing to trust all thy concernments in his hands? and in all
Cant. 8. 5.
thy addresses to God comest *leaning upon the arms of him*, as thy Beloved

loved Mediator and Interceſſour? why thus to renounce our own righteouſneſs, and to feel our hearts warmed into a further eſtimation of his; to attribute all our acceptance with God to him: Briefly, to be *intenſively willing* of Chriſt, and to look upon him with full ſatisfaction of ſpirit in all his Prieſtly Adminiſtrations, This is *ſincerely* to *love* Chriſt as our *High-Prieſt*. And on the contrary, to undervalue his blood, either, as *needleſs by preſumption*, or *as worthleſs by deſperation*; to be aſcribing to our ſelves, when we receive any kindneſs or favour from God; to doat upon our own worth, and righteouſneſs, as that which is ſufficient without either Chriſts Righteouſneſs, Satisfaction or Interceſſion: This is interpretatively to reject him from being our *High Prieſt*, and to hate the perſon of our Lord. Thus try your ſelves Heb. 10. 28.
whether ye love Chriſt in his Prieſtly Office; and when you have done with that, take thy ſoul to the Prophetical Office; and make a further trial, by beſpeaking thy ſelf after the ſame manner. Thus, Didſt thou ever (oh my ſoul) ſeriouſly conſider that thou waſt made for an eternal life, and that none could ever chalk thee out the way thereto, it being only to be learnt in the School of this great Prophet? And thereupon haſt thou wholly ceaſed from liſtening unto any other, and as a loving Diſciple haſt thou found pleaſure in ſeeking the Law, (even the word of thy Salvation) at his mouth? Doth thy heart throughly ſavour his Doctrine? and doſt thou like the Diſcipline of his School? Doſt thou make it thy ſtudy to know, and lay it as a charge upon thy ſelf, *to keep the words of* this great Maſter and Prophet? Joh. 14. 23, 24.
And even now, that he is gone to Heaven, and hath left his word in the Scripture behind him, and hath ſent his Spirit, and ſet up under-Officers in his School, and precious Ordinances for thy guidance and direction; doſt thou value the *Scriptures* above all other writings in the world? and witneſs thy eſteem of them, by thy daily peruſal, and ſtudy of them? doſt thou bear a Reverence in thy breaſt to all Chriſts Offices and Inſtitutions? Doſt thou account the *the mouth of Chriſt moſt* Cant. 5. 16.
ſweet? and even *delight* to hear his voice in the Scripture, and in every Pſal. 1. 2.
Ordinance? and when thou haſt heard, doſt thou lay up what thou haſt Heb. 2. 1.
been taught as the faithful counſel of thy deareſt Teacher, and rejoyce therein? More *particularly*, what is thy carriage towards his Spirit? doſt thou hear, when he calls? and art thou tractable to all his *Motions?* doſt thou grieve him, or art thou willing to be inſtructed and guided by him? why, thus to ceaſe from *leaning to our own underſtandings*; to give up our ſelves to Chriſt, and his Spirit in the Scriptures, and in all the Ordinances of the Goſpel; to be ſerious and willing;

ling Disciples of Christ; This is to *love Christ as our Prophet* in sincerity. That is the second office. Once more to make the trial by this mark Compleat, and that will respect his Kingly office: And this is as easie, as either of the former; for our *loyalty and voluntary Subjection to Christ*, as commanding, and governing, this is love; And the hearts rebellion against Christ, rejecting his dominion, murmuring against his Laws, finding fault with his administrations, disturbing his subjects; and disquieting the peace of his Kingdom, envying him the multitude of his subjects, and yielding no obedience to his commands; all these are several branches of enmity against Christ as King, and Soveraign. Put the case therefore home to thy own soul, if thou wouldst not be mistaken, and say, Doth Christ rule within thee (oh my soul) or doth *self*, and Satan? Art thou glad with his Soveraignty, or is it the Yoke thou canst not bear? do the Laws of his Kingdom bear sway within thee, or is it
Rom. 6. the *Law of thy members*, and carnal self? when both come in competition, whose command dost thou in the course of thy life most commonly fulfill? whose Kingdom art thou most delighted in the advancement of? Is it a pleasure to thee, that thy Lord doth reign, and that his *Throne* is more universally exalted? or else doth thy heart rise against the advancement of Christs Kingdom? In whom dost thou find thy greatest delight? Is it rather in the company of *Rebels*, that would pull the Crown from the head of Christ, than in the *humble and obedient subjects* of thy Lord? dost thou take Christ to be thy *Prince and Soveraign?* and dost thou love the peace and glory of his Kingdom, as becomes an obedient subject of so great a Lord? why this is *intensively to will Christum Regem*, or to love him as King And this is the third Office, and the fourth Character. If you would make sure work, this is a Rule which will not deceive you.

5. *Character.*

If we have a fellowship with Christ in his *honours and dishonours*, or in his *joys and sorrows*, then is our love not feigned unto Christ, but in *sincerity*. True-love (if I may be allowed so to speak) *mixeth concernments*; my meaning is, that it makes anothers joys and sorrows to be mine, as well as his: they may write *hatred upon themselves*, who are regardless whether it go well or ill, with Christs interests in the world. *No communion with Christ, no love.* Even the personal reproaches and abuses, which Christ indured here below, though so many hundred years since, do yet affect them, and they that love him, have a sympathy with him in them. Neither is it his joy alone that he
Luke 24. 52. Act. 2. 26. was personally advanced by being raised again from the dead, and taken

taken up to glory, to sit therein at the right hand of God, but theirs also: Tell a loyal wife, that her husband is honoured, and her heart will leap at the tydings, that are brought to her. 'Tis good news to love-sick souls to hear that Christ is now in Glory, they savour the advancements of their Lord, according to those words of Christ himself to his Apostles; *If ye loved me, ye would rejoyce, because I go to the Father, for my Father is greater than I*, Joh. 14.28. They are glad by Faith to see *the Sun of Righteousness* after a dark and cloudy morning in his *Meridian Altitude*. Joh. 20.20. They die, and are crucified with Christ in his death, *Rom.* 6.3. *Gal.* 2. 19. And they feel a reviving of themselves in the Resurrection of their Lord; and hence it is said of them, that they are quickned together with him, *Ephes.* 2. 5. and that they sit together in heavenly places with him, *Ephes.* 1. 20. We read of *Mary*, that she *went weeping* to the grave of her Lord, but hearing that he was arose, she *came away rejoycing*: And no otherwise was it with his Disciples. Christ doth not triumph alone in his Ascension, but all such as love him, share therein together with him. And as they share with Christ in his personal joyes and troubles; so do they no less, when any of his concernments in the world, do either prosper, or else are trampled upon and clouded. 'Tis as the arrows of death to see either his Laws, Ordinances, Officers or Subjects trampled upon. The reproaches of the rebellious world reproaching their Lord fall upon them, and are as so many darts struck into their own souls. This is that, which successively feeds their joys and sorrows, that it goes well with the Militant Church here below, or that a cloud of displeasure and persecution is spread over it.

Joh. 20.11. compared with Mat. 28. 8.

Psal. 42.10. & 69. 9.

6. *Character.*

Where love to Christ is sincere, there Christ is accounted by the soul to be its *Treasure*; and there is a *longing desire* in every such soul of the *nearest Communion* with him: I put both these together, though there be a very clear distinction between them, for brevity; it is a truly *conjugal* love, which can neither bear with distance, nor brook any Rival. And this is the meaning of the Spouse in that double expression, calling him *the chiefest of ten thousands*, and professing him to *be altogether lovely*. Cant 5.10.16 The soul that loves Christ, may love other things, and esteem them lovely; but she will say of none, that they are *altogether lovely*, but only of her Lord. When one asked *Alexander* to shew him his Treasure, the report is, that he pointed to his friend *Ephestion*; the *Treasure* of a soul that sincerely loves Christ, is *Christ himself* [*Deus meus est omnia*, or] *my God is my all, saith the Soul*, that

loves God as his *ultimate end.* Hence is that of *David,* Psal 73.25. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and who is there on Earth, that I desire besides thee?* [*Christus meus est omnia,* or] *my Christ is my all,* saith the soul, that is upon inquiry how to find acceptation with God. Whence is that of *Paul, Doubtless I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledg of Christ: Phil.*3.8. 'Tis the proper Motto of a love-sick soul, *None but Christ:* The sincerity of a Christians love lies in giving a preheminence to the Redeemer, whom it loves above every thing else. The soul that loves Christ. values nothing in comparison of him, no not his own benefits. [*Meretricius amor est, plus annulum, quam sponsum amare,* or] It is a note of a Harlot, to prefer the *portion* before the *person.* And that is a no less true than noble speech of the devout *A. Kempis* [*Nobilis amator non quiescit in dono, sed in Christo super omne donum*; or] The *Worthy and Noble Lover values* not Christ so much by what he brings, as by what he is himself. The soul that loves Christ, loves Ordinances, because they are the
Cant. 2. 4. *banqueting house of her Lord,* wherein she is often refreshed by him; she loves the *Priviledges* of the Gospel, because they are the *Purchase* of her
Cant. 4, 1, &c. Lords blood; She loves her own *Graces,* because they are the rare Ornaments which Christ hath put upon her to render her beautiful, and fit her for his own imbraces; and yet after all, her language to Christ is, *Not Thine, but Thee:* She will not so value them, as to forget him, that gives them; Christ is her Center, and therefore she rests not, but will lay by, and *through* all to come to him; She can scarce forbear a fit of Impatience sometimes to think of that distance that is still between them. See *Cant.* 8. 14. *Make hast my Beloved* (saith the Spouse to Christ there) *and be thou like to a Roe, or to a young Hart upon the Mountains of Spices;* And such another Ejaculation is that, *Revel.* 22. 17, 20. where the whole Church is brought in crying to Christ, *Come Lord Jesus, come quickly:* While our hearts dwell below upon the thick Clay, and have no daily desires to send forth (*as Doves from the Ark*) for communion with Christ, There is little sign of sincere love to him.

7. *Character.*

We may know our Sincerity in love, by *the value we put upon our selves,* as well as upon Christ; if our interest in Christ *be the Rule by which we* valne our selves, that will argue true love; when this makes it day in our souls, that Christ smiles upon us, and on the other side, when this spreads the *darkness of the* night over us, that he hides his

his face from us; then we love him. *David* loved God heartily, and therefore when God smiled, he rejoyced, *Psal.* 4.6. and when *God hid his face, he was* as much *troubled* then, as before delighted; 'Tis thus in every relation, where there is sincerity of affection, as the bond thereof, and a dependance between them, of the one upon the other; 'Tis thus between a Prince, and a loyal Favourite; between a Husband, and a loving Wife; 'tis thus between the love-sick soul and Christ; when she enjoyes him, then none so *light some* in Countenance as she? According to the nature of love, her affections are hardly concealed; they are even too big for her heart to cover, and therefore she can scarce withhold her self from a Holy exultation before every one that meets her. Whereas on the other side, if Christ but withdraws, if she *calls*, and he *gives no answer*; if he seems to avoid her Company, and to despise her familiarity; what then? Oh then her Joy is turned into Gall, and her Pleasantness into Wormwood; then her Countenance grows *dark and sable*, and her thoughts within her are full of horrour, dejection, and confusion; She goes up and down like a person almost distracted, and every place is made to *Echo* to her griefs, and mournings; she goes from Ordinance to Ordinance, and from one Watchman to another, and proclaims to them all the sickness of her Soul, If peradventure she may recover again the sight of her Beloved. All this and much more with incomparable elegance you may read described in the *Song of Solomon*. Thus as the Marigold opens to the Sun in the firmament, so doth the heart of a Sincere Christian to the *Sun of Righteousness*, Christ in Glory. Psal 30.3.

8. *Character.*

Where Love is Sincere, the soul will *be often on the wing of Meditation, and busied in the contemplation* of Christ. It's an old Rule and a true one, [*Animus est ubi amat, non ubi animat*, or] The Soul dwells as much where it hath fixed its love, nay more there, than where it hath its most natural operation: Christ and the Believer that loves him, live as if they had but one soul betwixt them. 'Tis not the distance between Earth and Heaven that can separate them; True love will find out Christ where-ever he is; when he was upon the Earth, they *that loved him*, kept his Company, and now that he is gone to Heaven, and out of sight, those that love him are frequently *sending* up their *hearts* unto him. And indeed they never think themselves intelligent in any thing that is worth the knowing, untill they have made their souls much acquainted, and familiar with their *Crucified* Saviour, 1 *Cor.* 2.2.

9. *Character.*

2 Sam. 13. 2. 1 King. 21. 4. Heſt. 5. 13. There will be a *Willingneſs to part with all for him:* How many goodly things do perſons of all ſorts contemn for ſome *one* thing, which they love? *Amnon*, *Ahab*, and *Haman*, are three great examples of this: Take but one inſtance, and it ſhall be of a Covetous man; Why, he diſregards all the learned accompliſhments in the World, for a little gain; He thinks himſelf better, when he hath got that which comes out of the *Bowels* of the Earth he treads on, than that which comes from the Manſion-houſe of God, in *the Heaven* above him: and therefore, how familiarly, and eaſily will he part with the one to chooſe the other? no Act. 20. 24. bonds of nature or religion, are enough to reſtrain him; 'Tis the reſolution of a ſoul that loves Chriſt, that nothing ſhall part them, they are habitually Martyrs already, and if he put them to it, 'tis not *life it ſelf* that they will account too precious to lay down for the ſake of him. Mat. 10. 37. Rev. 12. 11. All the *waters and floods* of perſecution, temptation, and affliction, ſhall not quench their flames of love, *Cant.* 8. 7. Witneſs thoſe words of *Ignatius* [πῦρ καὶ σάυρος, &c. or] let fire, croſs, *&c.* and all the torments, which by men or beaſts can be inflicted on my body, yea and add to them, what all the Devils in hell can do upon it, if it were by *ſo-* Joh. 13. 5, 6, 14 *lemn ſentence of Excommunication* delivered to them; yet would I go through them all, to come to the boſome of my Lord.

10. *Character.*

There will be a willingneſs *to ſtoop to the meaneſt offices*, for the ſervice of Chriſt; *love* (we uſe to ſay) *ſtands not with Majeſty*; it did not do ſo in the perſon of our Saviour, when he waſhed and wiped his Diſciples feet; and thoſe that love him will not think it much to conform to his example; they will not think they can ever ſtoop too low for the ſake of him, *Joh.* 21. 15.

11. *Character.*

If it ſticks not *barely in the perſon of Chriſt*, but *reacheth to all*, that have an union with him; if it be to Chriſt *myſtical*, as well as *perſonal*; if you love their perſons, their graces, their fellowſhip, *&c.* Cant. 1. 7. *Tell me* (ſaith the Spouſe) *where thou cauſeſt thy flocks to reſt at Noon?* She delights to be led forth with them into the *green Paſtures* of his ordinances, and to feed together with them; If ſhe hath any thing, Act. 2. 44, 45. it's all theirs, who have an equal intereſt in Chriſt with her ſelf, ſhe will make uſe of her graces, ſubſtance, and all, that fellow-members may be refreſhed. It makes them of Catholick ſpirits. The Apoſtle is peremptory, and brandeth them all as lyars, that pretend to the one of

of these without the other. See 1 *John* 4. 19. & 5. 1. & *John* 13. 34, 35.

12. *Character.*

We may know it by its *Concomitants*. Sincere love goes not but in the company of every other grace; It either presupposeth, or strongly implieth and inferreth the *whole duty* of a Christian. [*Diligere Christum* (saith *Aquinas*) *est Christo in omnibus se subjicere, & regulam Præceptorum ejus in omnibus sequi*, or] to love Christ, is to fulfil the whole Law of Christ; 'tis a most comprehensive grace; 'tis the abstract of the New Creature, the *whole* Image of God: in *one word*; 'tis the substance of the Divine Workmanship upon the soul. They are but *Ciphers*, and signifie nothing in Christianity, who are without it. Briefly, to love Christian, it is in some measure to partake of every grace, and to be a *Christian altogether*. Joh. 14. 15.

These are the Characters, some I have omitted, and in others I have been brief, because I would reserve a little room for the second Case: Give me leave but briefly to suggest a few things for satisfaction of one doubt, and I shall presently come to that. Will some say, If this be love in sincerity, *who then loves him aright*? It is no less dangerous to draw out the description of a grace, so as none can find it, than to leave it so, as *none may suspect* the want or absence thereof in themselves; and upon that *Rock*, they will tell me I have *splitted* in the decision of this Case, there being hardly any one that can go from Character to Character, and say after a thorough search, *Now I know that I am a lover of Christ in sincerity*: For answer to which scruple, I shall barely suggest a few Considerations.

1. It is most certain, and notorious, that there is much *counterfeit love* abroad; and it was not the least part of my design to unmask it. Characters serve as well to *convince* the presumptuous, as to *establish* the sincere and upright. There is much in the world, that looks like love, that is not; such are those *Vigous* affections, that are to a *Christ in general*, and not to him, as King, Priest, and Prophet; And those counterfeit affections, which are to Christ upon the *sole* Arguments of Education, Custom, which are as truly in a *Turk* to his *Mahomet*, and serve as well to *justifie the Jew in his* blasphemy against Christ, as the Christian in his pretended love of him; for love to Christ, *say Divines*, is not so much to be measured by the degree, and fervour, as by the grounds and motives; And also that barren love, which works up the soul to no measure of obedience unto him; And lastly, that which allows Christ but the worlds *leavings* in our hearts, every thing being constantly,

ſtantly preferred before him: And what a vaſt number of perſons go no further than theſe?

2. Many perſons are truly gracious, who yet know not, whether they have any grace or not: It requires more *skill* to *ſearch* out the nature of a grace, and to find it in our ſelves, than barely to exerciſe it; The former are works of much judgment, and require a *deep acquaintance* with our own hearts; whereas to the latter, it is enough, if a perſon be but of an *ordinary* underſtanding, and an *honeſt* heart. Beſides, Graces have their degrees, like the waters of the Sanctuary, and where *grace* is very *ſhallow* and *little*, it is *exceeding difficult* to know that there is any at all: And ſuch perſons ſhould do well, who are ſo weak, rather *to ſpend time in the exerciſe of grace*, than in trying whether they have grace or no; for commonly *it is but labour in vain.*

Ezek. 47. 3, 4, 5.

3. There are no ſouls in whom this grace is really planted, but they have all theſe Characters drawn upon their hearts to know it by, more or leſs; I do not ſay, they can find them in themſelves, and know they have them, but only that they have them. And of this I need give no further evidence, than what you will eaſily find your ſelves, if you will but ſtudy the nature of love to Chriſt, by the Rule of it laid down in the fifth Propoſition premiſed, and by the third and fourth Characters; for I am well aſſured that Chriſt cannot be loved, as therein deſcribed, unleſs all theſe particulars mentioned, be either antecedent thereto, or connexed with it.

2. *Caſe.*

And ſo I come to the ſecond Caſe, *viz. How we may get our love to him kindled and inflamed?* And I ſhall proceed in the Reſolution of this, by theſe four ſteps.

1 I will diſcover the danger of being without this grace.

2. I will add ſome moving Conſiderations to provoke all that love their ſouls, to look after it.

3. I will give directions to them that have it not, how to get it.

4. I will add a few more Directions for them that have it, how it may be increaſed and inflamed?

I begin with the firſt, which I will diſpatch by theſe two ſteps. 1. By diſcovering the Hainouſneſs of Sin. 2. The Terrour of the Puniſhment due thereto.

Now that you may underſtand the firſt, beſides what hath been ſaid *in the fore-mentioned Tract*, proving it to be a ſin *againſt the Fathers love and wiſdom; the whole work of the Son, and the ſpecial Oeconomy of the Holy Ghoſt*; I add firſt, it's a ſin utterly *ſubverting the whole* deſign of the Goſpel,

Gospel, casting a scorn upon the grace of all the three persons, and not so much as acknowledging what was done by them, as worthy the least acceptance; it writes *vanity* upon all the promises, and is a *frustration* to the design of Christ in that *Noble Dispensation*, there being nothing that he did more aim at, than to testifie his own, and his Fathers love to us, and to recover from us our love to them again. Joh. 3. 17. 1 Joh. 1. 3.

2. It is *interpretatively a confederacy with Satan against God and Christ*; The proper and grand wickedness of the Devil, being his opposition to the design of God in glorifying himself by the salvation of mankind through Christ, which yet so far, as we are haters of Christ, we are in our measure guilty of, as well as he. Mat. 6. 24. Act. 13. 10. Heb. 10. 28.

3. It is a *complicated sin*; *many sins in one.* Such as are *foul ingratitude*; *Rebellion*, it being the casting off the Soveraignty of a Rightful Lord: Cruelty to Christ, and as it were, a kicking him upon the bowels, *a Christicidium*; and to our selves, *Prov.* 8. 36. the tearing out our own bowels, with our own hands, *spiritual uncleanness and adultery*, it being a treacherous revolting from Christ after profession of Marriage to him. Jam. 4. 4.

4. It is *a sin which opens the door to all wickedness*, Resistance of the Spirit, contempt of the Gospel, and them that bring it, sleighting of Ordinances, Treason against Christ as King, and implacable bitterness and enmity against his subjects, and children. Joh. 15. 18, 19.

5. It is *an irrational sin*, or such for which there cannot be the *least Apology*; because Christ was lovely in himself, did much to ingage our hearts to him, earnestly intreated us to place our affections upon him, sending his messengers to woo us, bestowing gifts upon us, *like a King*, to oblige us, and making almost incredible offers of much more that he would do for us, yea, finally, threatning us even with *Anathema Maranatha*, 1 *Cor.* 16. 22. if we withhold our hearts from him; And can such a sin after all this be extenuated? Cant. 1. 13, 14. 5. 9. *ad* 16. 1 Pet. 1. 4.

6. It is *a sin brought forth, and nursed by the foulest abominations*, such as *spiritual darkness*, and ignorance, Notorious Infidelity, as to the doctrine of the Gospel, Horrible Pride, Self-righteousness, Idolatrous and carnal Self-love. 1 Cor. 2. 8. Joh. 5. 43, 44, 47.

7. It is a sin *against all our Covenants and Ingagements*, especially our *Baptismal bond*, wherein we did solemnly promise Christ our hearts, and that in opposition to all others; the bond of Christian *Ingenuity*, *Self-love*, and *proper Interest*, *Profession and Relation*, as we bear his Name in the world. 2 Cor. 11. 2.

8. And lastly, It is a sin utterly inconsistent with the presence of *any*

one

one grace in the soul; it being impossible, that any thing should prosper, where this *weed* hath once setled and rooted it self; you may as well expect to find *branches without a Root*, as the *graces of the Spirit* without *love*: Thus very briefly you have an account of the danger of being without love to Christ, from the nature of the sin.

2. I argue it from the *Terror of the Punishment*: And certainly the *Just God* hath proportioned the *evil of this*, to the *quality of that*. Study well these few places of Scripture, *Job.* 3. 19. *Mat.* 21. 41. *Heb.* 2. 3. & 10. 28, 29. & 12. 25. *Rev.* 2. & 3. throughout. On the terrors of the Lord, that will one day be *heaped upon* the haters of his Son! See *Rev.* 6. 16. But we need not look any further for this matter, than *into the awakened conscience* of a *Rebel* against Christ in a fit of desperation: what *Scorpion-lashes* doth such a mans conscience give him! Oh the heat of this burning Caldron! with what rage and fury doth it break forth on every side, untill the Soul is even become *a Hell* to it self! And *wouldst thou not love Christ* (will inraged conscience then say) so lovely in himself, and so full of love to thee? Couldst thou see him *sighing*, *bleeding*, *sweating*, *dying* for thy sake, and yet not love him? Couldst thou spurn at such *bowels*, and contemn such *prodigious* mercy? and that when this love would have opened to thee the door of *glory*? how great? how infinite glory? and when the rejecting of it would infallibly plunge thy soul into misery? how dreadful, how intolerable? was ever madness like thine, *oh my soul*, will *conscience* say? certainly Hell is too easie a punishment for such a *Serpent*, such an *Incarnate Divil* as thou art; well may God rejoyce to be avenged on such a wretch as thee, and make thee to drink up the very dregs of his Indignation; while others that *dwell in God*, shall dwell in love, oh how will God be nothing else, but fury, and wrath and vengeance to thee? Thou shalt *one day* (and *that day* such as *never* shall have an end) hear Justice call upon Omnipotency still to add more flame to thy torment? Thus conscience will look backward, and forward, and even wreak it self with the most dismal flaming language, that it can find out, upon the haters of Christ; And is not that a dreadful sin, which shall thus set *a man against himself?* and put a sword into the hand of *cruel conscience* to cleave the soul in pieces? And is not that a dreadful punishment, when a man shall become his own *Accuser*, *Judg*, and *Executioner*? When conscience shall burn so hot within a man, that he shall be a terrour to himself, and an eternal amazement? And yet alas what is all this to the *immediate impressions of the wrath of God* upon the soul? when

when he that hath said *Vengeance is mine, and I will repay*, shall grasp the soul in his dreadful hand: which might be farther improved, and be demonstrated to be incomparably the sorest part of the punishment; but I come to the second particular, which was to lay down some moving Considerations, to provoke such as love themselves, to love Christ; and besides the particulars last mentioned, Heb. 10. 30.

Consider 1. Who it is that I plead for this day: Sirs I do not call you to doat upon thick clay, filth, and vanity: I do not plead to gain your hearts to one that is not *worthy*, or hath not *deserved* that you should place your affections upon him; if you can make either of these manifest, hate him and spare not; but I plead for one who is 1. glorious, and excellent, if you doubt it, read his Character, *Cant* 5.9. *What sayest thou now*, is he not *altogether lovely?* is there any blemish to be found in him? and if thou mistrustest the Judgment of the Church, sure thou canst not doubt of Gods; Hear this sentence, *Mat.* 3. 17. *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.* He knew *of whom* he spake, for he *was his Son*; and he doth not say, he was pleased with him only, but well-pleased, *i.e.* delighted, (See *Prov.* 8. 30.) and satisfied. And was he *worthy of Gods love*, and dost thou doubt, whether he hath deserved thine? 2. Consider he is one that *died* for thee; first to purchase thy love, and since is gone to Heaven, where yet he doth not *cease* to call upon thee, and invite thee to bestow thy heart upon him; were he excellent, but proud, it would be little to thy advantage; But he stoops, and wooes, and intreats thee. 'Tis a day of the *Gladness of his heart* when he prevails but *with one soul* to close with him: And all the rage of his persecutors did not grieve him more, than you will if you stand it out against him. 3. Consider, he is one that hath *the power of thy life and death* in his own hands; and this is one part of his Covenant, upon which thy life or death depends; as offered in the promise, so he waits, but as love is the Condition of it, so if thou hearkenest not, thou lostest thy share therein, and what thou chusest, be it life or death, thou shalt Certainly have. Isa. 55. 1. Luk. 15 20. Act. 9. 4. Joh. 5. 21, 26.

2. Consider, what it is I plead for; why, all that I ask is love, and will you deny Christ that? I call thee to *think well of* Christ, to *desire* him, to *take Complacency* in him; to breathe after union and eternal communion with him; And which of these dost thou think *too much* for such an object? or where canst thou place them, more fitly than upon him? what is he worthy of, if not of this? did ever *death* content it self with such a recompence? was ever any debt easier paid? any service so easily performed, as this, only to love? hath God made Christ a

King, Priest, and Prophet, and is that all which thou must do, to partake of *his love* in him, to love him in those relations, and wilt thou stick at this? Hast thou any other way to the *bosom of God* but by him? and yet rather than thou wilt come thither *by love*, wilt thou *damn thy soul by hating Christ*? is not the enjoyment of God, worth the *labour of love*?

1 Thes. 1. 3. shall all go, rather than be *saved by love to thy Redeemer*?

3. Consider, *what he will do for thee*, if thou art a sincere lover of him; He comes not to *court* thee, and flatter thee to thy loss, but his

Rev. 22. 12. *reward* is great, and he *brings it with him*. Give me leave to tell thee some particulars thereof; If thou wilt love him, he will *betroth thee*

Hos. 2. 19. 20, *to himself* in dearest love; He will be thy *Bridegroom*, and thou

Ephes. 5. 32. shalt be *his Bride*; 'Tis not all thy *filthy garments*, *Rags*, *or Po-*

Zech. 3. 4. *verty* that shall hinder, but he will be to thee the *Covering of thine*

Gen. 20. 16. *eyes*: And a gladness of heart shalt thou be unto him, *Zeph.* 3. 17.

Rev. 21. 9. Thou shalt be *the Joy of* Christ himself, *for as the Bridegroom rejoyceth*

Isa. 62. 5. *over the Bride, so shall the Lord thy God rejoyce over thee.* 2. He will *dwell with thee*, *John* 14. 23, 24. Husband and Wife dwell together,

Joh. 17. 23. and so doth the betrothed soul and Christ. *I in them, and they in me*, saith Christ; Now this is a privilege, which carries *many in the womb*

Rev. 3. 23. of it, such as are these: 1. *Intimacy and daily familiarity*, Christ and

Eph 5. 20. Christians, *take their meals together*; there is no Communion so near, as that which is between them. *One Spirit*, 1 *Cor.* 6. 17. 2. *Maintenance*,

1 Tim. 5. 8. *and provision. He is worse than an Infidel, that provides not for his own house.* All that live under the same roof with Christ, have their *daily*

Heb. 13. 5. *bread* provided for them at his charges; and he hath said, *that he will never leave them.* 3. *Protection*, every mans house is his Castle, they are under *safe Covert* that dwell with Christ. 4. Counsel, guidance,

1 Pet. 3. 7. and direction: This great Husband *dwells with all his family according to knowledg*, for he teacheth them *all his Secrets*, and *shews them his*

Psal. 25. 14. *Covenant*. 3. He will *Interest thee* in all *his own Riches*, *Purchases*, *Possessions*, and Dignities; together with his person, he offers Heaven

Rom. 8. 17. and Earth for a *Dowry*. All things are his by purchase, and thou shalt

1 Cor. 3. 22. be a Co-partner or *Co-heir* with him, when thou art espoused to him.

23.

Isa. 54. 7, 8. 4. He will manifest the *highest Indulgence*, *and tenderness towards thee*: Not all thy cross walkings (if through temptations it shall so fall out) shall put him upon any more than *momentany* departure from thee;

Psal. 89. 33. for he hath resolved that *his faithfulness towards thee shall never fail*, and therefore when thou seemest almost lost, and ready to despond, he

Cant. 6. 3. will return to thee again, and the more time he hath lost by absence, the more full will his heart be of ravishing love and affections to thee.

5. He

5. He *will turn all to thy good*; neither thy *sins*, though many and great, nor thy *miseries*, though overwhelming and discouraging, no nor lastly shall *death* it self, be ever able to make a divorce between thee and him; but serve *as a passage* to thee when thy work is done, into the Bride-chamber of thy Lord; and now tell me, hast not thou reason to love him? Rom. 8. 28, 38 Phil. 1. 21.

4. Consider but thy case, while this Virgin-affection to thy Saviour is wanting.

1. Thou *multiplyest thy whoredoms, and thy abominations* continually, for what are thy *intensive willings* of other things, but so many acts of spiritual adultery, and base *prostitutions* of thy soul to thy dishonour and dis-advantage, while other things *usurp* the room of Christ?

2. Thou art *a treacherous Hypocrite* and deceiver, forasmuch as thou pretendest to the eye of the world to be Christs, and yet art nothing less than his.

3. You lay *a bar in* against your selves, and the acceptance of all your duties; when *faith works by love*, then is obedience illustrious, and meet for a gracious acceptation; that obedience which owes no part of it self to love, is worth little, and brings in no more than it is worth. Gal. 5. 6.

4. You make *bonds* for your selves in death, *and lay up terrible reproaches in the Consciences* against the day of Judgment. Job 27. 6.

5. You make your *damnation* necessary; there being no Congruity to any of the Divine Attributes, much less to the offices of Christ, that that man should ever be saved, who never had any sincere affection to him. These are some of the Considerations, which may be of use to them, that have no spark of love yet kindled in their hearts: There are a few of the other kind, which may provoke to get this love *Inflamed* where it is, such are these,

Consider 1. The love of Christ to thee was *a growing, increasing* love; I do not mean, in respect of the *habit*, but in the outward demonstration thereof. The nearer he was to his death, the more exuberant in love, and when he rose again, his heart did overflow with tender indulgence, as appears by the meltings of his bowels towards *Mary*, and over *Peter*; and much more may we believe him now to be full of them, now that he is at the Right hand of God.

2. There is more *loveliness* in Christ, than ever thou canst find out or fathom; when we have let out our affections to the utmost, there will still be more than we can find affection for; our love to eternity will have something *of admiration* mixed with it.

3. It's all you can return to him; it's all he looks for at our hands; that which *lies in love*, and which *flows from it*, is the whole, that is required to compleat Christianity.

4. The more you love him, the more lovely you are unto him. Then hath Christ the highest complacency in us, when our hearts are under the *greatest Raptures* of love to him.

5. It is the honour of a man to love Christ superlatively. It is the sweetest part of our lives, and that which Christ values us more by, than by any thing else: It's Heaven on Earth.

Beatus est, qui intelligit quid sit amare Jesum, & contemnere seipsum propter Jesum. A Kempis. de imitatione Christi. l. 2. c. 7.

6. According to the measure of your love, so will all the rest of your services and graces be, *i.e.* either more or less, better or worse. Love is like the Master wheel in an Engine, making the whole soul to move faster or slower. These are the *considerations* of the last kind; will some say? oh, but *what shall we do to get this blessed affection into our souls?* which was the third thing proposed: And in order thereto, I offer these Directions.

1. *Direction.*

Be *well acquainted with the nature* of this great duty. The great mistake of the world lies in this; That is thought to be love, which is not, and thence men and women grow bold and confident, and value themselves more than they ought. I have given in my best assistance, so far as the nature of the first Case would permit, to prevent mistakes in this matter before; and therefore I will not do it over again. Only remember, if you would not miscarry, that it is not a *Naked Christ*, but a *Christ advanced by incomparable Personal Excellencies*, and cloathed with his offices of King, and Priest, and Prophet, that is the Christ to be loved, and you cannot well miscarry. This is that damning mistake of the world, they love Christ, but not as dignified by God with any of his offices.

2. *Direction.*

Be much *in the study of your selves*, what you were originally, and what you are since become through your own miscarriage, wilfulness and folly: Take your souls to the glass of the *Law*, and go from one precept to another, and when you have done there, go to the *Gospel*; And be sure you do not deal *sleighly*, but understand throughly how *much* you have offended; And when you have well studied the number and quality of your sins, then consider the justice and holiness of the Eternal God, which you shall understand by the *same Law and Gospel*, where they speak the Divine Terrour against offending sinners; but more specially shall ye know it by going to the Cross of Christ,

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Christ, and wisely and seriously considering the horrour of that punishment, which Christ there indured? for we *never know as we ought* the evil of sin, and our misery thereby, until we know what he indured to make an Expiation for it. Do this, and do it faithfully: They that *never knew themselves*, they are most *certainly without love to Christ*: And it is enough to prove it, because unless this foundation be first laid, they can see no sufficient reason for it.

3. Direction.

Get a true *Conviction* concerning *thy own ultimate end and happiness*, Where it lies? *viz.* not in the *objects of sense*, but in the *Beatifical Vision of God*; possess thy soul by Scripture light, of the grand importance of securing thy Interest therein; while your think your happiness lies any where else than in God, it will be irrational to love Christ, because his purpose and design is to take our hearts from the pursuit of all but God: And untill you *know God to be your happiness*, you will never understand the *best reasons* (that I may not say, *the only*) that you have to love him. That *man loves Christ best, that most fully knows God to be his eternal rest and blessedness, and loves him as such.* Mat. 16. 25.

4. Direction.

Get a *Gospel-knowledg of Christ*; both what he was originally, and what he hath stooped and humbled himself to be for thy sake; why he came into the world, how he lived and died, and what was the Covenant between the Father and him? how he is exalted and honoured by God? and what great things are promised both by Father and Son to all that in *Christ sincerely draw nigh to God.* Oh the sweet gales of affection, which by spiritual Meditation upon Christ will begin to blow within us: We cannot *muse upon Christs dying, and rising again, and inviting us to love him*, but the fire will burn: *A considering Faith in Christ will naturally bud and blossome into love.*

5. Direction.

Believe *the reality of his love to thee*: I mean, that he did all that ever he did for thee out of a *hearty and weak affection* to thee; and that he still desires to have the match made up betwixt thy soul and himself: That *fond prejudice*, whereby souls put discouragements upon themselves, is that which spoils many a match: Do not *weaken thy soul by making difficulties* where there are none; if thou hear Christ inviting, stir up thy self (oh thou convinced soul) as if thou heardest him even *calling to thee by Name*; Believe it, that Christ is never better pleased, than *when he is loved*, and that he came no less to procure thy love, than to testifie his own. The way to *love Christ in good earnest, is to believe that he is so in his offers of grace to us.*

6. Direc-

6. Direction.

Understand the world throughly, and be jealous of thy own heart therein: Remember that of the Apostle (who knew what it was to love Christ, as well as any man ever did) 1 *Joh.* 2. 15. *If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* We may well enough add, *Nor the love of the Son:* We may offer to our Lord [*cor fractum*, or] a broken-heart, but we must not presume to desire him to accept our [*cor divisum*, or] divided heart: Remember that Christ and the World are two, contrary each to other, and the single stream of love cannot run two contrary ways at once. *If our hearts be not crucified to the world, the love of Christ will never live within us.*

7. Direction.

Be much in attendance on those means or Ordinances, wherein Christ is *evidently set forth*, and by his Spirit wooing souls to love him. If Faith comes by hearing, so no less certainly doth love. Christ most commonly honours his own Ordinances, and Officers, in making up the match between himself and soule; so he did *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 11. 2.

8. Direction.

Go to God and Christ for love: When you have gotten your hearts well warmed with the use of all the fore-mentioned means, then go to God and Christ, and turn thy *Meditations* into *Petitions*. Plead *hard*, and *heartily* all those moving Considerations which were set down to usher in these Directions. God *delights to honour Prayer* in this great work of *his*, in drawing souls to Christ: No Prayer, no Faith: And it is as true, *No Prayer, no Love, no Marriage to Christ.*

I have done with the Directions of the first kind; and have therein almost prevented my self from going any further; it being a Rule in the spiritual, as well as the natural growth, that *we are nourished by the very same, that gave us our first beings*, If we know by what means we came by our love at first, and have our appetites whetted on to a further growth, we need little more. And therefore having first perswaded you carefully to continue to practise over the fore-mentioned Directions. I only add.

1. Direction.

Consider much *your own Experience*, and the *great advantages* you have made by this grace: I need not tell what they are, because ye know them well enough already; and the sense of past advantage will best quicken to future diligence; which is the second.

2. Direction.

Be constant in the *exercise of that love ye have*: The best way to *strengthen*

then any habit, is to *be often repeating its Acts.* We cannot do any thing better to increase love, than to be often *acting* love.

3. *Direction.*

Get *Faith more rooted*, and that will make your love to be more inflamed. If you would have *fruitful branches*, you must keep *the Root* of the Tree *fat*; and if you would have *any Grace* to thrive, you must be *sure to strengthen* Faith.

4. *Direction.*

Take *heed you be not willingly guilty of any known wickedness against Christ*; for this will cause Christ to withdraw; it will occasion in thy heart *a jealousie*, and that will be an *abatement* of thy love: Be conscientiously diligent in all known duties.

5. *Direction.*

Get thy heart daily *more throughly crucified to the world*; and *better acquainted with Heaven*, and the *love of God*. The more *you love God*, the more you will, and must love Christ.

6. *Direction.*

Be much in the Communion of Saints, and then especially when together with them thou mayest look on, and admire the love of thy crucified Saviour in the Lords Supper. They *that are most where Christ* is to be enjoyed, *love him best*; And these are briefly the heads of Directions in answer to each of these Inquiries. They might have been more largely insisted on, and pressed, but this defect must be supplied by your selves.

Remember again, and with that I will conclude, that it is not the knowledg of these Directions, that will advantage you, but the serious and diligent practice of them; *And so Grace be with all them, that in the diligent use of these means get and inflame their love to the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.*

What

Wherein lies that exact Righteousness, which is required between man and man.

Mat. 7. 12.

Therefore all things whatsoever you would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

THese Words being brought in by way of Inference from something said before, we must look back a little to find out the relation of them to the former Verses. At the seventh vers. Christ commands to ask of God those things which we want, to encourage us to ask, he promises we shall receive; to induce us to believe this promise, he puts a temporal case; Our earthly Fathers which are evil, give us good things when we ask them, how much more easily may we believe this of a good God, of infinite goodness. Now as we desire God should give us those things we ask, so we should do to others; and not only so, but *universally in all other things, what we would that men should do to us, that we should do to others. That men should do unto you*; though the persons be expresst, yet we may take it impersonally, by an usual *Hebraism*, as if it had been said, *whatever* you would should be done unto you, leaving the person to be supplied in the largest sense; thus, whatever you would should be done unto you by God or men. *This is the Law and the Prophets*, *i.e.* This is the sum of the Old Testament, so far as concerns our duty to our neighbour.

The

The *Observation* which ariseth from the words is this.

The great rule of equity in all our dealings with men, is this, to do as we would be done unto; This Rule hath been otherwise expreſt, but not more emphatically in any other form of words than this here in the Text; *Mat.* 22. 39. *Love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf*; this requires that we ſhould bear the ſame *affection* to our Neighbor which we would have him bear to us, but the *Rule* in the *Text* expreſly requires that we ſhould do the ſame *offices* to others, which we would have them do to us. *Severus* the Emperor (as the *Hiſtorian* tells us) did learn this rule of Chriſtians, and did much reverence Chriſt, and Chriſtianity for it, but he expreſt it negatively, *Quod tibi non vis, alteri ne feceris*; Now this forbids us to do injuries to others, but doth not ſo expreſly command us to do kindneſſes and courteſies. *Lampridius.*

In ſpeaking to this Rule, I ſhall give you,

1. The *Explication* of it.
2. The *Grounds* of it.
3. The *Inſtances* wherein we ought principally to practice it.

1. For *Explication*, the meaning of it is this: Put thy ſelf into the Caſe and circumſtances of every man, with whom thou haſt to do, that is, ſuppoſe thou wert he and as he is, and he were thy ſelf and as thou art; that then which thou wouldſt deſire he ſhould do to thee, that do thou to him; and that which thou wouldſt be unwilling he ſhould do to thee, do not thou do to him. Now this is an *exact* rule, for we are very curious in determining our own priviledges, and what duty others owe to us; juſt ſo much as we take to our ſelves, we muſt allow to others; what we expect from others when we are in ſuch circumſtances, we muſt do the ſame to them in the like. And this is a *plain* and eaſie rule, many men cannot tell, what is Law or Juſtice, or right in ſuch a Caſe, many cannot deduce the Laws of Nature one from another, but there is no man, but can tell what it is that he would have another man do to him; every man can take his own actions, and put them into the other ſcale, and ſuppoſe, if this that I do now to another, were to be done to me, ſhould I like it, ſhould I be pleaſed, and contented with it; And thus by changing the ſcales, his own ſelf-love, and ſelf-intereſt, and other paſſions, will add nothing to the weight, for that ſelf-intereſt, which makes a man covetous, and inclines him to wrong another man for his own advantage, makes him likewiſe (when the ſcales are changed) unwilling that another man ſhould wrong him; that ſelf-conceit which makes a man proud, and apt to ſcorn, and deſpiſe others,

makes him unwilling that another should contemn him.

I question not but by this time, you understand the meaning of the rule; but we are not yet past all difficulties about it; Three things are to be done, before this rule will be of use to us.

1. We must make it appear, that it is *reasonable.*
2. Make it *certain*, for till it be certain it cannot be a rule.
3. Make it *practicable.*

1. We must make it appear to be *reasonable*; The difficulty about the reasonableness of it is this; according to this rule I shall be obliged to do that many times, which is sinful, and to omit that which is a necessary duty; I will give two or three instances; *Saul* would have had his Armour-bearer, to have kill'd him, might he therefore have kill'd his Armour-bearer if he had been willing, and had desired it? I may not be an instrument, or furtherer of another mans sin, though I were so wicked as to desire that another would be so to me; If I were a Child, I would not have my Father correct me; or a malefactor, I would not have the Magistrate cut me off; must there therefore be no correction or punishment? Now because of these, and the like instances which may be given, the rule is necessarily to be understood of things that may be done, or omitted, *i. e.* which are not unlawful or unreasonable; *Saul* might not kill his Armour-bearer, I may not further another mans sin, in the cases propounded, because these things may not be done, they are morally impossible, that is, unlawful; A Parent or Magistrate, may not wholly omit Correction or Punishment, because such omission would tend to the ruin of good manners, and of human Society.

2. We must make the rule *Certain*; The difficulty about the certainty of it, is this; everlasting disputes will arise about what is lawful, and reasonable, and unlawful and unreasonable; Now we must reduce it to a certainty thus; whatever I would that another should do to me, that I should do to him, unless the thing be *plainly* and *evidently* unlawful or unreasonable: & this cuts off all disputes, for though there may be perpetual disputes about what is lawful and reasonable, or the contrary, yet there can be no dispute about the unlawfulness and unreasonableness of those things which are plainly and evidently so, for that which is plain and evident, is out of all dispute; To confirm this let us consider another Text, *Phil.* 4. 8. Where the Apostle exhorts Christians to follow whatever things are *true*, and *honest*, and *just*, and *pure*, and as a discovery of what things are such; he adds whatever things are *lovely*, of *good report*, and *praise worthy*; that is, whatever things are amiable

ble well ſpoken of, and praiſed by wiſe and good men (who are the only competent Judges of theſe things) if they be not plainly contrary to truth or honeſty, or juſtice, or purity, follow theſe things; and if this be not the meaning, thoſe words *lovely*, of *good report*, *praiſe-worthy* are ſuperfluous, and do not at all direct our converſation, which certainly the Apoſtle intended to do by them.

3. We muſt make it *practicable*; There are two things which make the practiſe of it difficult.

1. A ſeeming *contradiction* in the rule.

2. *Partiality* in judging of the circumſtances of other mens conditions and our own.

1. A ſeeming *contradiction* in the rule; which you will ſee in theſe inſtances; if I deſire a thing, I would not have another ſtand in competition with me for it, if another deſire a thing, I would not have him think much, that I ſtand in competion with him; if I be indebted to another, I would not have him arreſt me; if another be indebted to me, I would not have him think much that I arreſt him; when we ſell we care not how dear, when we buy we care not how cheap; now if this were a real contradiction in the rule, it were impoſſible it ſhould be put in practice, but it is only a contradiction in our *wills*, which muſt thus be reconciled to the *rule*.

1. We muſt conſider which of theſe wills is moſt reaſonable, and the greater reaſon and equity muſt carry it, and that which is plainly unreaſonable, in compariſon of the other, is not to be regarded; If we conſider the two firſt inſtances, this is moſt reaſonable that where men have an equal right, they ſhould be allowed an equal liberty to uſe that right; another man hath as much right to ſtand in competition with me for any thing, as I to ſtand in competition with him, and to arreſt me in caſe of debt as I to arreſt him, and it is plainly unreaſonable that I ſhould uſe this right and another be debarred from it.

2. If both theſe Contradictory wills be plainly unreaſonable as in the third inſtance of buying and ſelling, they muſt be *accommodated* by finding out ſuch a *medium* as is *equally and mutually* good for all buyers and ſellers, that is, ſuch a proportion of gain may be taken and muſt be allowed to be taken, as will be equally and mutually good for all buyers and ſellers.

2. Another difficulty in the practiſe of this rule, ariſeth from mens *partiality* in judging of the circumſtances of other mens conditions and their own; we are apt to leſſen the circumſtances of another

mans condition, and to over-value our own; another mans concernments seem less to us than they are, and our own greater than they are. Now this difficulty will most eminently appear in *Cases* of *passion*, and *interest*, and those *subordinate relations* which are at the greatest distance; another man provokes me, I revenge my self on him; one asks me, would you be contented to be thus dealt withall; I am ready to answer, yea, if I should so provoke another; I aggravate the fault of his provocation, and lessen that of my own revenge, here is *passion*. I desire a courtesie of a man which he cannot conveniently do for me, he denies me, I think much at him, because I judg the *courtesie less*, and *his obligation* to do it *greater*, than indeed it is; here is *interest*. I think, if I were a Father, I should not carry my self so severely towards my Children; if I were a Master, I should give more liberty to servants, and use them with a greater familiarity; if I were a Minister, I should not gall the consciences of people by so free and open a reproof of sin; if I were a Magistrate, I should make other Laws, or punish some crimes more or less, severely: Now if men frequently thus mis-judg, *how* shall this rule be put in practise?

To remove these difficulties, as much as may be, and to make the practice of this Rule more easie: observe these rules.

1. Labour to understand truly every mans condition, so far as you have opportunity; this is easily said, but how shall we come to do it? Thus, when you are in any condition, observe diligently the motions of your own mind, and how your affections then work, and what apprehensions you then have of things, and what it is that in such a condition you desire, and expect from others; and labour to remember this when you are out of that condition, and to retain the sense which you then had of things.

2. In cases wherein you are unexperienced, and which you cannot reasonably be presumed to understand, partly because of your distance from that condition, partly because of the opposition of your own interest; and partly because of the mists, and clouds, of your own passion; trust the concurrent experience of others, that are in that condition; and think that you ought not to do that to another, which the generality of mankind count grievous, and that fit to be done, which the most, and wisest in such a condition and relation, do usually expect. If men when they are under, and lye at the mercy of others, generally desire that clemency and moderation should be used towards them, how just soever thou mayst think thy severity is, and that thou wouldst be contented, that another should deal so with thee, yet do not trust thy present

preſent apprehenſions of things, but believe that thou wilt have the ſame ſenſe of things, when they lie heavy upon thee, with the reſt of man-kind, and when thou art in their circumſtances, thou wilt deſire quarter as they do; In like manner, that reſpect and obedience which Parents, and Maſters, and Magiſtrates, do generally expect (even the beſt and wiſeſt of them) that do thou pay to them; and though it may have ſome appearance of rigour, and injuſtice, yet believe that when thou comeſt to be in the ſame relation, thou wilt expect the ſame things as they do; and that thou doſt now judg otherwiſe, proceeds from thy inexperience, and diſtance from that condition, or from paſſion and oppoſition of intereſt.

3. Conclude, that in caſes betwixt Superiors and Inferiors, the partiality is uſually on the Inferiors ſide; and it is reaſonable thus to conclude, both becauſe Inferiors have ſeldom had experience of the other condition, as Superiors uſually have had; a child hath not been a Parent, or a ſervant ordinarily a Maſter, or a ſubject a Magiſtrate; but all Parents have been Children, and moſt Maſters have been Servants, and many Magiſtrates Subjects, and ſo they have had experience of both conditions; And likewiſe becauſe Inferiors cannot ſo well ſee the condition and circumſtances of thoſe that are above them, as thoſe that are above can of thoſe that are below them, they have the advantage of ground, and better opportunities of knowledg.

4. In judging of your preſent condition and circumſtances, always abate ſome thing for the preſence of them, and for ſelf-love, and ſelf-intereſt, and other paſſions. He that doth not conſider how apt every man is unequally to favour himſelf, doth not know the littleneſs and narrowneſs of humane nature. We are near to our ſelves, and our own intereſt is near to us, and we ſee it in its full proportions, and with all poſſible advantages, other men and their intereſts are at a diſtance from us, and ſeem leſs to us than they are. Now we muſt make abatements for this, according to that experience which we have had of our own miſtakes, which, if we will obſerve, as we paſs from one condition into another, we may eaſily be convinced how great many times they are.

2 For the *grounds* of this. The equity of this Rule ſtands upon theſe foundations.

1. All men are equal in many things, and thoſe the greateſt things. Now I ſhould deal equally with him, whom I acknowledge to be mine equal. *Have we not all one Father, hath not one God created us?* Are we not all made of the ſame materials? *Is it not appointed for all men.* Mal. 2. 10. Heb. 9. 27.

men once to die, and after death to stand before the impartial judgment of God? We have all the same notions of right and wrong, we are all obnoxious to one another, and may be all beneficial one to another; we all love our selves, and study the advancement of our interest and happiness. Thus far equal.

2. *In most of those things wherein we are unequal, the inequality is not considerable*, so as to be a ground of any unequal dealing with one another. As to *strength of body*, whatever the difference be, the inequality is not considerable, because as to the greatest effects of strength, there is an equality; every man that will venture his own life, may take away another mans, either by open force, or by surprize. *As to abilities of mind* (which we usually call *parts*) there is *originally* a great equality, especially if that received *Opinion* be true, that *souls are equal*; And as the *French* Philosopher *Des Cartes* hath ingeniously observed, there is this notable sign of the equality of mens understandings; *Nullæ res* (saith he) *æquabilius inter homines distributa est quàm bona mens*, &c. *Nothing is more equally divided among men than a good understanding; Men will acknowledge others to be richer and stronger than themselves; few will acknowledge others to be wiser, or to have better parts than themselves; every man thinks himself to have so good a proportion of parts and wisdom, that even those who are most covetous, and have the most insatiable desires as to other things, and whom nature could never satisfie in any thing else, yet would not desire to have more wit than they have, or exchange their parts with any man.* Now there is no better sign of an equal distribution of things than that every man is contented with his share. *Now because all men generally think thus, it is to be presumed that all are not deceived, but that there is some real equality, which is the ground of this conceit.* A difference indeed must be granted, but which ariseth usually from one of these two cases, either an *unequal exercise of our parts*, or *an unequal temper of body.* Now those who are so happy, as to exercise their understandings more than others, are very often rather conceited that they are wiser than others, than really so; *for the greatest Clerks are not always the wisest men*; those who are unhappy in the temper of their bodies, are thereby inclined, how weak soever they be, to conceit themselves as wise as others. So that whatever real inequality there be, conceit levels all again. So that whether men be really wise, or only think themselves so, it makes no difference as to mens dealing with one another; for they that think themselves equal, will not deal but upon equal terms. So that *Aristotles* pretty notion, that *wise men are born to govern, and fools to obey*;

Dominus est alterius vitæ quicunque contemnit suam.

Dissertat. de Methodo.

Qui velit ingenio cedere, rarus erit.

Politic. 1.

obey, signifies very little in this case, for there are but few such fools in the world, but would govern if they can: So that by vertue of wisdom or parts, no man can challenge a priviledge, or prerogative to himself above others, which another will not pretend to, as well as he.

3. *In all those things wherein men are unequal, the inequality is not fixt and constant, but mutable and by turns.* All things that belong to us are either the *endowments* of the *mind*, the *accidents* of the *body*, or the *circumstances* of our *outward estate*; Now those that are most unequal in any of these, may be equal; for the inequality may turn and be as much on the other side. A disease may ruin the most happy and excellent *memory*, and make a man forget his own name; a little knock on any side of the head, may level the highest *understanding* with the meanest; *beauty*, *health* and *strength* may be blasted by a disease, or a thousand other accidents; *Riches*, and *Honour*, and *Reputation* are the most slippery and brittle things that belong to us; and when these are gone, *friends* will fall off, like leaves in *Autumn*. Now why should I despise another man, when I may be as silly as he; or bear down another by my strength, when I may be as weak as he; or insult over anothers poor and low condition, when a day may level me with his meanness, and raise him to be as great and rich as I am?

4. Another ground is, *the mutual and universal equity and advantage of this Rule.* Upon those terms I and all men shall be equally dealt with, it will be well with me, and well with all men. The observation of this Rule would secure peace to the world: and if it were generally practised, those few that should offend against it, would be looked upon as the pests and troublers of humane society. As by the violation of this Rule, every man becomes a *Wolf*, and *Beast of prey* to another, so by the mutual observation of it, every man would be *a God* to another; men would be full of mutual goodness, and pity, and compassion, they would be mutual benefactors one to another. All men would be as happy as it is possible for them to be in this world, and no man could be miserable if it were in the power of his neighbour to help him.

5. The last ground I shall mention is, *the absurdity and inconvenience of the Contrary.*

And this is the most proper way of proving this; for as *Aristotle* tells us, *First Principles which are evident by their own light, cannot be proved by way of demonstration, but of conviction*; As thus, *contradictions cannot be true at once*; This cannot be demonstrated *a priori*, because there

there is nothing true before it to prove it by, therefore whoever shall deny it, must be convinced of the truth of it, by shewing the absurdities of the contrary. In like manner this being one of the first Principles of humane society, that we should use no more liberty towards other men, than we would allow them to use towards us; the best way to convince any man of the reasonableness and equity of it, will be to shew him the inconveniences of the contrary. Where-ever this Principle is violated, men will think themselves injured; where men are injured, they will be apt to vindicate themselves; hence comes contention and wars, which loose the bands of humane society; or if a man can pardon an injury, that hath received one, yet he that hath done it cannot believe so, but he will fear revenge; and fear of being oppress, makes a man seek to anticipate and prevent another, so that every injury endangers the peace and security of mankind, and lays the foundation of perpetual mischief; for by the same reason that I injure any man, I am obliged to ruin him.

He that breaks this Rule, doth what he can to break humane society; that is, to spoil himself of all common protection, and to leave himself to stand upon his guard against all the world; in which state no man can hope to continue that is not wiser and stronger than all the world.

ἄ δυηλον ἢ θεὸς. Pol. c. 2. *Aristotle* tells us, *He that desires to be alone, must either be a God or a wild beast*; that is, He must either be self-sufficient, and stand in need of nothing, or else be wild and savage, and delight in cruelty, and mischief.

3. The *Instances* wherein we ought chiefly to practise this Rule, are these.

1. In matters of *civil respect and conversation*, I must treat every man with that fair respect which I would have another to shew to me. We must accommodate our selves to mens particular tempers, and not be froward or intractable, or tenacious of our own humour, especially when it lies in another mans way, but we must be apt to recede and give way, that there may be room for other mens tempers and humours, as well as ours; our humour must not take up all the world. Those who want this *compleasance*, are in society (as one ingeniously compares them) like irregular stones in a building, which are full of roughness and corners; they *take* up more room than they *fill*; till they be polisht and made even, others cannot lye near them: so men of sharp and perverse humours are unsociable, till the ruggedness and asperities of their nature be taken off. We must not carry our selves insolently, or superciliously, or contemptuously towards others;

others; we must not be contumelious, nor by deed or word, countenance or gesture, declare hatred or contempt of others. We must not upbraid one another with any imperfection, or weakness, or deformity, we must not peremptorily contradict others, we must not use to talk things displeasing to others, wherein their credit, or relations, or (especially their Religion) is concerned; *Josephus* saith, this was one of *Moses* his Laws (it was a good one whose ever it was) ὃς ἄλλαις πόλεσι νομίζουσι θεοὺς μηδεὶς βλασφημείτω, *Let no man blaspheme that which other Nations count a God*, or make their Religion. Not but that every man may confute a false Religion, and indeavour by all fair ways to convince a Jew, or Turk, or Heathen; but we may not reproach another mans Religion, or provoke any man in ordinary conversation, by unseasonable and uncivil reflections upon it; for we are with meekness to convince gain-sayers, to reprove men for their sins, but not to upbraid them with them: We must give no offence to the Jew, or to the Gentile, remembring always that the wrath of man doth not work the righteousness of God; and that *Michael* the Arch-Angel, when he contended with the Devil, did not bring a railing accusation against him, he did not revile him; no, not in heat of dispute. And there is great reason why we should thus carry our selves towards others, because we our selves would not be contemned or despised, we would not have any man jeer us, or insult over us, or upbraid us, or peevishly contradict us, or affront us by speaking unhandsomely of us, or of our Relations, or of our Religion. Now if we would have others to consider us, we must not neglect them; if we would be taken notice of for some body, we must not overlook others with contempt; every thing thinks it self considerable, and there is nothing comes sooner to us, or continues longer with us, than a sense of our own worth; and we judg ill of human nature, if we think another man is not as impatient of rude and uncivil usage as we are; nothing would be despised, a worm would not be trod upon; nay, men do usually over-value themselves, and are apt to think that they are owners of that singular worth, which may command respect from all men, and that every one that passeth by ought to fall down, and do obeysance to them; they have *Josephs Dream* waking, they think *all mens sheaves bow to their sheaves*; they think every man takes notice of them, and observes their carriage and actions, when probably not one of a thousand ever took them into consideration; or askt who they were. Now we must consider, that it is a hundred to one but there is a little of this vanity in us also, and that we do usually look for more respect than is due, therefore it will not be amiss in our respects

Antiqit. Judaic. lib. 4.

towards others, *largiri aliquid*, to give men something above we think they deserve, and the rather because civil respect is cheap, and costs us nothing, and we expect from others full as much as comes to our share; for it is a mistake to think that we do but righteously esteem our selves, and that we have no more than a just value of our own worth.

2. In matters of *kindness* and *courtesies*, we must be useful to one another. I would have no man churlish to me, but ready to gratifie me, and do me a kindness. Do I think much to be denied a reasonable favour, and doth not another so too? We would have all men love us, that is, bear such an affection to us, that when it falls in their way, they should be ready to do us a courtesie. We would not have courtesies done in a discourteous manner, extorted by importunity, or upbraided to us afterwards. Let us likewise dispense favours with a liberal hand, and a chearful countenance, that men may see that they come from a kind heart, and a real good will.

3. In matters of *charity* and *compassion*, if any man be in misery, pity him, and help him, to your power; if any be in necessity and want, contribute to his relief, without too scrupulous inquiries about him; for we would be thus dealt with our selves, we would not have others to harden their hearts, or shut up their bowels of compassion against us. Is any man cast down? do not insult over him, and trample upon him, do not look upon him with scorn, and rejoyce over him in the day of distress *Res est sacra miser, Persons in misery are sacred, and not to be violated.* When you see any man in calamity, think ye hear him say to you with *Job, I also could speak as you do, if your soul were in my souls stead, I could heap up words against you, and shake mine head at you, but I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips should assuage your grief,* Job 16. 4, 5.

4. In matters of *forbearance* and *forgiveness*; We stand in need of forbearance and pardon from others, from God and men, we should be loath God should take advantage against us upon every provocation, and let fly at us with a thunderbolt every time we offend him. We would not have men storm and fall into passion with us upon every sleight occasion; I would have great allowances given to me, I would have my *ignorance*, and *inadvertency*, and *mistakes*, and *present temper*, and all *occasions* and *provocations*, and every thing considered. And when I have done amiss, upon acknowledgment of my fault, I would be forgiven and received to favour. Now if we would be thus dealt with, we must bear with others; the best men need some grains of allowance; *Nullum unquam ingenium placuit sine venia*; no man was ever so perfect, so accomplisht, so unexcepti-

unexceptionable, but there was some thing or other in his carriage that needed pardon; every man hath a particular humour, we must give some allowance for that; every man is subject to mistake, we must allow for that too; and if a man have committed a fault, we must accept of an ingenuous acknowledgment, and be ready to grant him peace: There is a shame and disdain in human nature of too vile a submission; therefore we must not bring a man too low when we have him at advantage.

5. In matter of *report* and *representation* of other *men*, and their *actions*. We must not take up a rash prejudice or entertain a sinister apprehension of any upon sleight grounds; do not represent any man, his words or actions at a disadvantage; make the best of every thing; A mans good Name is like a Looking-glass, nothing is sooner crackt, and every breath can sully it. Handle every mans reputation with the same tenderness thou wouldst have every man use towards thine. Do not slander or defame any man, or rejoyce to hear other mens miscarriages ript open, do not account it an entertainment to censure and backbite all the World.

6. In matters of *trust* and *fidelity*. Where I place a confidence, and repose a trust, I would not be deceived, I must not deceive another, nor let any man fall that leans upon me. If a man trust me with the management of his business, or lodg a secret with me, or put his life into my power, or commit the care of his estate or children to me after his death; These are ingenuous trusts, and must be discharged with the same faithfulness we expect from others.

7. In matter of *duty* and *obedience*. We must give that honour to our Parents, which we would expect from our Children; and pay that reverence to Masters, which we would exact from our Servants; We must rise up before the gray head, and give respect to old Age? For let not us think, but that the change of *Relation*, and of *Age* will have the same effect upon us, which it hath upon the rest of the World: It is a folly to talk, that when we are *Old*, we shall be pleased with the insolencies of *Youth*; when we are Masters, we shall not be at all offended with the contemptuous carriage of our Servants; that it will not touch our hearts, to have our Children undutiful, and void of respect, to see the fruit of our body unnatural and unkind to us.

8. In matters of *freedom* and *liberty*; which are not determined by any natural or positive Law, we must permit as much to others, as we assume to our selves; and this is a sign of an equal and temperate person, and one that justly values his own understanding and power. But there is nothing wherein men usually deal more unequally with one another, than in indifferent opinions and practices of Religion: I ac-

count that an indifferent opinion which good men differ about, not that such an opinion is indifferent as to truth or error, but as to salvation or damnation, it is not of necessary belief; By an indifferent practice in Religion, I mean that which is in its own nature, neither a duty, nor a sin to do or omit. Where I am left free, I would not have any man to rob me of my liberty, or intrench upon my freedom, and because he is satisfied, such a thing is lawful, and fit to be done, expect I should do it, who think it otherwise; or because he is confident such an opinion is true, be angry with me, because I cannot believe as fast as he. Now if another do ill, in doing thus to me, I cannot do well in doing so to another. And do not say that thou art sure thou art in the right, and he that differs from thee, in the wrong, and therefore thou mayst impose upon him, though he may not upon thee; hath not every man this confidence of his own opinion and practice, and usually the weakest cause bears up with the greatest confidence; now if thou wouldst not have another that is confident he is in the right, to impose upon thee, do not thou impose upon another for all thy confidence. We should rather be modest, and say every one to our selves; *How came I to be so much wiser then other men? which way came the Spirit of the Lord, from so many wise and pious men, to speak unto me? Is it a peculiar priviledg granted to me, that I cannot be mistaken, or are not they most of all mistaken, who think they cannot mistake? If then I be but like other men, why should I take so much upon me, as if my understanding were to be a rule, and my apprehensions a standard to the whole world? As if when another man differs from me, I did not differ as much from him: why may not another man understand the thing better than I do, or what crime is it if he understand them not so well? Were all mens understandings cast in the same Mould? Is it presumption for any man to know more than I do, or a sin to know less?* Job doth well reprove this self-conceit, *Job* 12. 2, 3. His friends would needs bear him down, and were very angry with him that he was not of their mind, and would not acknowledg all to be true of himself which they said against him, he takes them up sharply; *No doubt ye are the people, and wisdom shall dye with you, but I have understanding as well as you, and I am not inferiour to you, who knoweth not such things as these?* Let not any man think that he hath ingrossed all the knowledg of the world to himself, but others know the same things which he doth, and many things better than he.

9. In matters of *Commerce* and *Contracts*, which arise from thence: Now a *contract* is *a mutual transferring of right*: when I buy any thing of another, he makes over the right of such a Commodity to me for so much.

much money, or other valuable thing, the right whereof I make over to him. Now in this kind of intercourse, we are to be governed by this great Rule. In *making* of contracts we must *agere bonâ fide*, deal honestly and truly: in *performing* of contracts we must give *liberare fidem*, satisfie the ingagement we have made, for thus we our selves would be dealt withal.

Now if any shall desire to be more particularly satisfied, *What that exact Righteousness is, which in matter of Contracts, ought to be observed betwixt man and man?* I must confess this is a difficult question, and to be handled very modestly, by such as acknowledg themselves unacquainted with the affairs of the world, and the necessities of things, and the particular and hidden reasons of some kind of dealings: For he that is ignorant of these, may easily give Rules, which will not comply with the affairs of the world, he may complain of that which cannot be otherwise, and blame some kind of dealings, which are justifiable, from particular reasons, not obvious to any man, who is unseen in the way of Trade. Besides, there are many Cases fall under this question which are very nice, but of great consequence, and the greater caution and tenderness ought to be used in the resolution of them, because they are matters of constant practise, and the greatest part of mankind are concerned in them; now it is a dangerous thing, to mistake in those things, in which many persons are interested, especially if they be things of such a vast difference, as *Good*, and *Evil*, *Right*, and *Wrong* are: For if that be determin'd to be lawful, which is unlawful, men are *led into Sin*; if that be determined to be unlawful, which is lawful, men are *led into a Snare*; for if this determination be to the prejudice of men in their callings, it is an hundred to one, but common example and private interest, will make many continue in that practise; and then the mischief is this, though men do that which is lawful and right, yet they are staggered by the authority and confidence of him, who hath determin'd it unlawful; and so have some reluctancy in their Consciences in the doing of it, and this by accident becomes a great sin to them; and when upon a Sick-bed, or any other occasion, they come to be touched with the sense of sin, this will be matter of greater horror and affrightment to them, than a real sin which they committed ignorantly, and were afterwards convinced of. Upon all these Considerations, I ought to proceed with great wariness, in the answering of this question, therefore I shall content my self with speaking those things which are clear and evident, though they be but general, rather than venture out of my depth, by descending into particulars, and such things as are out of my notice.

I shall

I ſhall therefore,

1. Lay down the General *Rule.*

2. Some *Propoſitions* which may tend to the explication of it.

3. Some ſpecial Rules, for the directing of our Commerce and intercourſe.

1. The general *Rule* is this; *That which it is not unreaſonable for me to deſire to gain by another, when I am to ſell, that I ſhould allow another to gain by me, when I am to buy; and that which it is not unreaſonable, another ſhould gain by me, when I am to buy, that, and no more I may gain by another, when I am to ſell.*

2. The *Propoſitions*, which I ſhall lay down, for the further explication of this Rule, are theſe,

1. *In Buying and Selling, ſuch a proportion of gain may be taken, and ought to be allowed, as is mutually and univerſally beſt.* And this every man is preſumed to deſire, becauſe this will be certainly good for every one, whereas if it be not univerſally good, it may be bad for any one, if it be not mutually ſo, it will be bad for me by turns.

2. *That proportion of gain which allows a reaſonable compenſation for our times, and pains, and hazard, is univerſally and mutually beſt.* If the compenſation be unreaſonably great, it will be bad for the buyer, if unreaſonably little, it will be bad for the ſeller, if equal, and reaſonable, it will be good for all.

3. *That proportion of gain, which in common intercourſe and uſe of bargaining among thoſe who underſtand what they buy and ſell, is generally allowed; ought to be eſteemed a reaſonable compenſation.* This is evident, becauſe the common reaſon of mankind doth beſt determine what is reaſonable: Therefore thoſe who ſpeak of *commutative juſtice*, and place it *in the equality of things contracted for*, need explaining, for *value* is not a thing *abſolute* and *certain*, but *relative*, and *mutable*: Now to fix the value of things as much as may be, this *Rule* is commonly given, *Tanti unumquodque valet, quanti vendi poteſt, Every thing is worth ſo much as it may be ſold for*, which muſt not be underſtood too particularly, as if the preſent and particular appetite of the Contractor were to be the Rule, for every thing is not worth ſo much as any body will give for it, but ſo much as in common intercourſe among knowing perſons it will give. For this I take for a truth, that in the ordinary plenty of commodities, there is an ordinary and uſual price of them known to the underſtanding perſons of every profeſſion; If I be out in this, the matter of gain will be more uncertain than I thought on.

4. *A reaſonable compenſation doth not conſiſt in an indiviſible point, but hath a certain*

a certain latitude which likewise is to be determined by the common intercourse and practice of mankind. Suppose ten in the hundred be the usual gain made of such a commodity, eleven the highest, nine the lowest, the latitude is betwixt nine and eleven.

5. *Every man ingaged in a way of Commerce, is presumed to understand, unless the contrary be evident.* So that keeping within the latitude of a lawful gain, I may use my skill against another man in driving a bargain. But if his want of skill be evident (that is) sufficiently known to me, I must use him as I would do a child, or other unskilful person, that is, fairly.

6. *Where the price of things alters* (as it often doth almost in all things) *no other Rule can be given but the common and market-price.* There are some things which are fixedly certain, *as Coyn*; there I have no latitude at all; I may not put off a piece of money for more than its value, though a person out of ignorance would take it for more; There are some commodities which in ordinary plenty being of an ordinary goodness, have an usual price; here I have but little latitude, *viz.* that of the market: In the rising and falling of Commodities, I have a greater latitude, but usually in these cases the Market sets some kind of price; unless I be the sole Master of a commodity, and here the latitude is the greatest, and my own reason and moderation must limit me: And if any ask why I make the Market the Rule, seeing this seems to be as if I should say, Let every man get as much as he can, for so men in the Market do; I answer, The Market is usually more reasonable than the particular appetites of men; and though every man be apt to get as much as he can, yet men generally have an appetite to sell, as well as to sell dear, and that checks this, and men are brought to moderation, because they are unwilling to lose custom; so that he that governs himself by the Market-prizes, not catching at particular advantages, seems to me to follow the safest Rule.

7. *There are some things allowed in common intercourse, which are so rigorous, that they are hardly just*, which are rather tolerable than commendable. I will give one instance instead of many: A man hath a small piece of ground lying within another mans estate, he is willing to sell, but requires (possibly) forty or sixty years purchase, or more, according to the particular appetite of the purchaser: This seems not to be so agreeable to this great rule of equity; I do not see but some advantage may be made in this case, and I will not set any peremptory limits; I shall only say this in general, we should set a moderate value upon another mans appetite and convenience.

8. *It is to be feared, that something very like unrighteousness, is woven into*

these

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the mystery of most Trades. And like *Phidias* his Image in *Minerva*'s shield, cannot be defaced without the ruin of it. I think this is not a groundless jealousie, but the confession & complaint of the most knowing and understanding persons in human affairs. I shall instance only in the *sleightness of work, the imbasing of Commodities, and setting them off by indirect advantages.* I can only bewail this, for unless the world could generally be convinced of this, it is not like to be amended. Perfection is not to be looked for in this imperfect state, we must be content if things are passable.

9. *Nevertheless we ought to aspire after as great a degree of Righteousness, and Equity, as the condition of humane affairs will admit.* We should bend all our endeavours to the bettering of the World, and not only avoid all unrighteousness, but draw back as much as in us lies, from the indirect practises of the World, and from all appearance of unrighteousness.

3. The more *Particular Rules* are these.

1. *Impose upon no mans ignorance or unskilfulness.* Thou mayest set a just value upon thine own Commodity, but not a price upon another mans head. I mean, thou mayest not rate a mans want of understanding, or set a tax upon his ignorance; therefore take no advantage of Children, or any other incompetent persons, and do not only use them with justice, but with ingenuity, as those that repose a trust in you, and cast themselves upon your equity. And here are some questions to be resolved.

Quest. 1. *If a man be otherwise skilful in his calling, may not I take advantage of his ignorance of a particular circumstance wherein the contract is concerned?*

Answ. I will tell you how *Tully* resolves this in a particular case: *A man* (saith he) *brings a Ship of Corn from* Alexandria *to* Rhodes, *in a time of great Famine, he may have what price he will, he knows of a great many more Ships that will be there next day, may he conceal this from the* Rhodians? He determines peremptorily he may not. If we will be worse than Heathens---I say no more. *De Officiis. l.* 3.

Quest. 2. *But may we not take advantage of the ignorance of the seller, though not of the buyer?* The difference is, he that offers to sell any thing at such a price, is willing so to part with it; now *there is no wrong done to him that is willing.*

I answer, *A man is so far willing, as he is knowing*; *Aristotle* tells us, *That ignorance is a sort of unwillingness.* If a man out of forgetfulness, or want of consideration, or sufficient understanding of his own calling, mistake himself, I may not make a prize of this mans weakness; for he is only willing to sell it so upon supposition he remembers right, and understands himself aright, but the thing being really worth more, he is absolutely unwilling, and I am injurious to him in taking advantage.

Quest.

Queſt. 3. *May I not ſell ſecret faults and vices in a commodity?*

Anſ. If the faults be ſuch as men take for granted do often happen, and notwithſtanding them, they do not account any man to have deceived them, then they are faults pardoned by common conſent; but if they be ſuch as I am grieved at, and think my ſelf not fairly dealt withall when they happen, then ſome think it is enough to allow for them in the price, but I think *Tully* hath determined it better, *Ne quid omnino quod venditor novit emptor ignoret*, *That the buyer ſhould not be left ignorant of any thing that the ſeller knows*: And this ſeems reaſonable, for I know not but another man may value thoſe faults higher than I do; however it is not ſo fair for me to make another mans bargain. *Offic. lib. 3.*

2. *Impoſe upon no mans neceſſity.* If a man muſt needs buy *now*, or *of thee*, becauſe none elſe is neer, make no advantage of this.

3. *When Gods providence hath put into thy hands ſome great opportunity and advantage* (as by the intervention of ſome unexpected Law, by a ſudden War or Peace betwixt Nations, or by ſome other caſualty) *do not ſtretch it to the utmoſt. Fortunam reverenter habe*, *Uſe this providential advantage modeſtly*, conſidering that he whoſe bleſſing gave thee this opportunity, can blaſt thee a thouſand ways.

4. *Uſe plainneſs in all your dealings*: This the *Roman Laws* called *bonâ fide agere*; Do not diſparage another mans commodity, or raiſe your own beſides truth, this is ſinful; do not inſinuate a commendation or diſparagement indirectly, thereby to lead a man into an error, that you may draw on a bargain the more eaſily; do not (as your phraſe is) ask or *bid much out of the way*, for if this be not ſimply unlawful, yet it doth not become an honeſt man: We commend the *Quakers*, becauſe they are *at a word* in all their dealings; we would be loath not to be counted as good Chriſtians as they are; let us do then as good things as they do, eſpecially when we account thoſe things *praiſe worthy*, and I am ſure *this* is no ways contrary to *Juſtice*, and *Honeſty*, and *Truth*: I know nothing that gives ſo real a reputation to that Sect, as this practice, and would it not adorn thoſe who account themſelves the more ſober Chriſtians: if we praiſe this in others, let us practiſe it in our ſelves. We are apt to value our ſelves much by our *Orthodox Judgments*, but let us take heed that *Sectaries* do not confute us by their *Orthodox lives*. For the ſake of Religion, *Next to your Conſciences*, *in all your dealings*, *tender your reputation*, for, *quod conſcientia eſt apud Deum, id fama eſt apud homines*, *that which conſcience is in reference to God, that our reputation is in reſpect of men.*

5. *In matters of vanity and fancy, and things which have no certain eſtimation, uſe moderation*; and ſo much the rather, becauſe in theſe thou art leſt to be thy own Judg.

6. *Do not go to the utmost of things lawful.* He that will always walk upon the brink, is in great danger of falling down: he that will do the utmost of what he may, will sometime or other be tempted to what he should not; for it is a short and easie passage from the utmost limits of *Lawful*, to what is *evil* and *unlawful*, therefore in that latitude which you have of gain, use *favour towards the poor and necessitous*, *ingenuity* towards the *ignorant and unskilful*, *moderation* towards *all men*.

7. *Where you have any doubt about the equity of dealings, chuse you the safest part, and that which will certainly bring you peace.* For not only a good Conscience, but a quiet Conscience is to be valued above gain. Therefore in matters of duty do the most, in matters of priviledge and divisions of right, and proportions of gain (where there is any doubt) chuse the least, for this is always safe.

Thus I have laid down the *Rule*, and explained it, and have given as particular directions, as I could safely adventure to do; I must now leave it to every man to apply it more particularly to himself, and to deal faithfully with his own Conscience, in the use of it. Circumstances which vary Cases are infinite, therefore when all is done, much *must be* left to the Equity and Chancery of our own Breasts. I have not told you how much in the Pound you may gain, and no more, nor can I: A man may make a greater gain at one time, than another, of the same thing; he may take those advantages which the change of things, and the providence of God gives him, using them moderately: A man may take more of some persons than of others; provided a man use *all* men righteously, he may use some favourably. But I have on purpose forborn to descend to too many particularities, among other reasons, for the sake of Sir *Thomas More*'s observation concerning the Casuists of his time, who (he saith) by their too particular resolutions of Cases, did not teach men *non peccare*, *not to sin*, but did shew them *quàm propè ad peccatum liceat accedere sine peccato*, *how near men might come to sin, and yet not sin*.

The Uses I shall make of all this, are these two.

1. *Use.*

Let us not revenge our selves; The Rule is not, we should do to others as they do to us, but as we would have them to do to us: as if it were on purpose to prevent revenge. Saint *Luke* forbids revenge from this rule; *Luk.* 6. 31, 32. For if you love them that love you, *&c.* But love your Enemies. Revenge is the greatest offence against this rule, for he that revengeth an injury, hath received one, he that hath received one, knows best what that is, which he would not have another to do to him; the nature of evil and injury is better known to the patient, than to the agent,

agent, men know better what they ſuffer, than what they do, he that is injur'd feels it, and knows how grievous it is, and will he do that to another?

2. *Uſe.*

Let me preſs this rule upon you; Live by it, in all your carriages, and dealings with men, let it be preſent to you. Ask your ſelves upon every occaſion, Would I that another ſhould deal thus with me, and carry himſelf thus towards me? But I ſhall preſs this chiefly, as to juſtice and righteouſneſs in our commerce. It is ſaid that *Severus* the Emperor cauſed this rule to be written upon his Palace, and in all publick places; Let it be writ upon our Houſes and Shops, and Exchanges. This Exhortation is not altogether improper for this Auditory; you that frequent theſe Exerciſes ſeem to have a good ſenſe of that part of Religion, which is contained in the firſt Table; do not by your violations of the ſecond, marre your obedience to the firſt; do not prove your ſelves Hypocrites in the firſt Table, by being wicked in the ſecond; give not the World juſt cauſe to ſay, That you are ungodly, becauſe they find you to be unrighteous, but manifeſt your love to God, whom you have not ſeen, by your love to your Brother whom you have ſeen; and if any man wrong his Brother, he cannot love him. Do not reject or deſpiſe this Exhortation, under the contemptuous name of *Morality*. Our Saviour tells us, this is a chief part of that which hath ever been accounted Religion in the World, *It is the Law and the Prophets*; and he by injoyning it hath adopted it into Chriſtianity, and made it Goſpel. We ſhould have an eſpecial love to this precept, not only as it is the dictate of Nature, and the Law of *Moſes*, not only as it is a Jewiſh, and Gentile principle, but as it is of the *Houſhold of Faith*. When the young man told Chriſt, that *he had kept the Commandments from his youth*, it is ſaid *Jeſus loved him*; wherever we have learned to deſpiſe *morality*, Jeſus loved it: When I read the Heathen-writers, eſpecially *Tully* and *Seneca*, and take notice what precepts of morality, and Laws of kindneſs are every where in their writings, I am ready to fall in love with them. How ſhould it make our blood to riſe in many of our faces who are Chriſtians, to hear with what ſtrictneſs *Tully* determines caſes of Conſcience, and how generouſly he ſpeaks of equity and juſtice towards all men. *Societatis arctiſſimum vinculum eſt, magis arbitrari eſſe contra naturam, hominem homini detrahere ſui commodi causâ, quàm omnia incommoda ſubire*; *This is the ſtrongeſt bond of ſociety, to account it to be more againſt nature,*

Lampridius.

Mark 10. 20, 21.

Offic. Lib. 3.

nature, for any man to wrong another for his own advantage, than to undergo the greatest inconveniences. And again; *Non enim mihi est vita mea utilior, quam animi talis affectus, neminem ut violem commodi mei gratiâ. Nor is my life more dear and profitable to me, than such a temper and disposition of mind as that I would not wrong any man, for my own advantage.* Again, *Tollendum est in rebus contrahendis omne mendacium No kind of lying must be used in bargaining.* And to mention no more; *Nec ut emat melius, nec ut vendat quicquam simulabit, aut dissimulabit vir bonus; A good man will not counterfeit, or conceal any thing, that he may buy the cheaper, or sell the dearer.* And yet further to check our proneness to despise Moral Righteousness, I cannot but mention an excellent passage to this purpose, which I have met with, in a Learned man of our own Nation. *Two things* (saith he) *make up a Christian, a true Faith, and an honest Conversation, and though the former usually gives us the Title, the latter is the surer; for true Profession without an honest Conversation, not only saves not, but increaseth our weight of punishment; but a good life without true profession, though it brings us not to Heaven, yet it lessens the measure of our judgement, so that a Moral man so called is a Christian by the surer side.* And afterwards, *I confess* (saith he) *I have not yet made that proficiency in the Schools of our Age, as that I could see why the second Table, and the Acts of it are not as properly the parts of Religion and Christianity, as the Acts and observation of the first; if I mistake, then it is Saint* James *that hath abused me, for he describing Religion by its proper Acts tells us, That pure Religion, and undefiled before God, and the Father is this, to visit the Fatherless and the Widow in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the World; so that that thing which in an especial refined Dialect of the new Christian Language, signifies nothing but Morality and Civility, that in the Language of the Holy Ghost imports true Religion,* Mark 12. 33, 34. When the Scribe told Christ, that *to love God with all the heart, &c, and our neighbour as our selves, was more than whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices;* it is said, *when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, thou art not far from the Kingdom of God.* They that would have a Religion without Moral righteousness, talk *indiscreetly*, and are farther from the Kingdom of God than a meer Moral man. If we neglect this part of Religion, we disparage the Gospel, and abuse our profession, we are but pretenders to Christianity. *Plutarch* speaks somewhere to this purpose, he had rather posterity should say, There was never such a man as *Plutarch*, than that he was a vicious, or cruel, or unjust man.

Mr. *Hales.*

I had

I had rather a man ſhould not call himſelf a Chriſtian, that he ſhould renounce this Title, than that by his life and actions, he ſhould repreſent Chriſtians to the world, as oppreſſors, as unjuſt, and treacherous dealers. If men will only uſe Religion for to cover their unrighteouſneſs, I had rather they would put off their cloaks, and be knaves *in querpo*, that every body may know them, than that they ſhould go like High-way-men in Vizards and Diſguiſes, only that they may rob honeſt men the more ſecurely.

And to move you to the practice of this Rule, I ſhall only offer to you one Conſideration, but which hath ſo much weight in it, that it may be inſtead of many; *As you deal with others, ſo ye ſhall be dealt with.* With what meaſure you mete to others, it ſhall be meaſured to you, is a proverbial ſpeech often uſed by our Saviour, and which one time or other you will find to be very ſignificant. God doth many times by his providence order things ſo, that in this life mens unrighteouſneſs returns upon their own heads, and their violent dealing upon their own pates; There is a Divine *Nemeſis*, which brings our iniquities upon our ſelves. No man hath any vice or humour alone, but it may be matched in the world, either in its own kind, or in another; if a man be cruel and inſolent, *A Bajazet ſhall meet with a Tamberlane*; if a man delight to jeer and abuſe others, *no man hath ſo good a wit, but another hath as good a memory*; He will remember it to revenge it; He that makes a trade of deceiving and cozening others, he doth but teach others to cozen him; and there are but few Maſters in any kind but are outdone by ſome of their Schollars. But however we may eſcape the hands of men, how ſhall we eſcape our own Conſciences, either trouble of Conſcience in this life, or the worm of Conſcience in the next? how ſhall we eſcape the hands of the living God? how ſhall we eſcape the Damnation of Hell? 1 *Theſſ.* 4. 6. *Let no man go beyond, or defraud his Brother in any matter, for God is the avenger of all ſuch.* He will take their cauſe into his own hands, and render to us according to our fraudulent and cruel dealing with others, *Matth.* 18. 35. *So likewiſe ſhall my Heavenly Father do alſo unto you, &c.* What our Saviour ſaith, *Mat.* 19. 29. That there is no man that denies himſelf in Houſes or Lands, *&c.* for Chriſts ſake and the Goſpels, but ſhall receive in this life a hundred-fold, and in the world to come everlaſting life, is true alſo here. There is no man that is injurious to his Brother in houſes, or lands, or good name, or any other thing, but ſhall probably receive in this world an hundred-fold; however (without repentance) in the world to come, everlaſting miſery. In the next world

men,

men will find, that they have but impoverished themselves by their ill-gotten wealth, and heaped up for themselves treasures of wrath; Read those words and tremble at them, *Jam.* 5. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, *Go to now ye rich men, weep and howl for your misery shall come upon you*, &c.

Let us then be perswaded, as we love God whom we have not seen, as we love the Gospel which we read and hear every day, and would preserve the reputation of it; as we would better the world, and the condition of mankind; as we love our selves and our own peace and happiness, to deal justly and equally with all men. Till we come to live by this Rule of Equity, we can never hope to see the world a quiet habitation. But if this were practised among us, then *Glory would* [Psal. 85. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.] *dwell in our Land, Mercy and Truth would meet together, Righteousness and Peace would kiss each other, Truth would spring out of the Earth, and Righteousness would look down from Heaven; yea the Lord would give that which is good, and our Land would yield her increase, Righteousness would go before him, and set us in the way of his steps.*

After

After what manner must we give Alms, that they may be acceptable and pleasing unto God?

1 Tim. 6. 17, 18, 19.

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.

That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate:

Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on Eternal life.

THe sum of these words is *a Direction for rich men how to make the best use of their riches*]. The ground or occasion of this Direction, is to meet with an Objection, which might be made against the discommodities and dangers of Riches, noted before in *ver.* 9, 10. *But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.* v. 10. *For the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after they have erred from the Faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.* From hence some might infer, as the Disciples did from the inseparable and inviolable bond of Marriage, noted by our Saviour, *Mat.* 19. *If*, say they, *the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry.* So might some say, if they that will be rich fall into temptation, and a snare, *&c.* then it is not good to be rich; yea such as are rich men say, Let us give away, or cast all that we have, rather than retain such Vipers, as Riches seem to be.

To prevent such inconsequent inferences, the Apostle giveth this Direction, whereby he sheweth that Riches may be well used, and being

being well used, be a means of helping on our Eternal salvation. Learn hence not to condemn things good in themselves, because of the abuse of them. The Lord in regard of the ordinary abuse of Riches, styleth them *Mammon of unrighteousness*, and yet adviseth not thereupon to cast them away, but to *make to our selves friends thereof*; that is, so to use them, as the good works done by them, may, as friends before the Judg give evidence of the truth of our Faith and Love, and shew that we are of the sheep of Christ, for whom Eternal life is purchased.

Luk. 16. 9.

Having thus shewed the occasion and dependance of these words upon the former, come we now to the Logical resolution of them; where we may observe two parts.

1. A *Prohibition*. 2. An *Injunction*.

A *Prohibition* of hurtful Vices.

An *Injunction* of needful Virtues.

The vices are two, { 1. *High-mindedness*. 2. *Vain-confidence*.

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain Riches. The Virtues are likewise two.

1. *Confidence or Faith in God; but trust in God*, which is urged by an Argument taken from Gods bounty, in these words, *who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.*

2. *Charity towards Men*, expressed in several phrases, *viz. by doing good, and by being rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate*; which duties are inforced by an Argument taken from the benefit of performing them, which is, in brief, assurance of Eternal life, implied in these words, *Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on Eternal life.*

I shall briefly speak something to the several branches of the Text, as they lye in order, and then come to the Question or Case of Conscience given unto me to handle.

Charge them that are rich in this world: The expression of our Apostle is here observable, in that he saith not λέγε, speak to them, not ἄγγελλε, declare to them, but παραγγέλλε, charge, command them. Well did the Apostle know how forward on the one side rich men are to be high-minded, and to trust in their riches; and on the other side, how backward they are to trust in God, and to shew charity to the poor, and thereupon saw it requisite that a Minister should take courage to himself, and not think it enough, closely to intimate to rich men, what Vices they are addicted to, or what Virtues they are bound unto, but, remembring the place wherein they stand, which is Gods, in the Nam-

παραγγέλλε.

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Name of his most excellent Majesty, to require, charge and command them to forbear the one, and indeavour after the other.

In the next place follows the parties to whom this charge is to be given, namely, To the rich in this world, *Charge them*, saith the Apostle, *who are rich in this world*, that is, in this present world; noting our riches to be only for this world; for true is that Proverb of the Wise-man, *Riches are not for ever*, they cannot be carried out of this world. *As naked we came into this world, so naked shall we go out of it.* Prov. 27.24? Job 1. 21. And therefore it must needs be a point of great wisdom by that which is but for this present world, to store up a sure foundation for the time to come.

In the next place follows the Vices here forbidden, the first is, *High-mindedness*, whereunto rich men are very prone, in that their wealth is as wind, and though wind be but a vapour, yet it puffeth up exceedingly, as we see in a bladder blown up with wind. In like manner, Riches, though they be but *meer vanity*, as the wise man expresseth it, yet are they apt to puff up men extreamly, even to think of themselves above what is meet. Whereas if rich men would but well weigh, that they came from, and must return to the same mould that others do; *for dust they are, and to dust they must return*; Yea, if they would consider, that they came from the same cursed stock that others do, and are by nature no better than the meanest; especially if they would consider, that outward riches cannot add the least dram of real worth to the owners of them; but though they may be more honourable parts or members in the civil body of the state, yet in the mystical body of Christ they may be less honourable than the poor; I say, if rich men did but seriously consider these things, they would not be so high-minded as they are. Eccles. 1. 2. Gen. 3. 19.

The other Vice here forbidden unto rich men, is, *Vain-confidence*, or *trusting in their riches*, and this is very fitly joyned to the former; for where our pride is, there will be our confidence. That rich men are apt to put too much trust and confidence in their riches, doth appear by the titles which they commonly give unto them, calling them *their goods*, as if they were the only good things; and *their substance*, as if all things else were shadows; and by the increase of them, they say they are made for ever, and by the loss of them, they say they are utterly undone. What do these expressions imply, but a trust and confidence in their Riches; whereupon saith the Wise-man, *The Rich mans wealth is his strong City, and as an high wall in his own conceit.* It makes him think himself so safe and secure, that like the Judg mentioned by our Saviour, *he feareth not God, nor regardeth man.* Prov. 18. 11. Luke 18. 2.

In the next place follows the Virtues enjoyned.

The firſt is *Confidence, or Faith in God,* which is directly oppoſed to truſt in Riches, ſo as rich men may have wherein to truſt, though they truſt not in Riches. God is the God of the Rich, as well as of the Poor, and the one as well as the other, are to put their whole truſt in him.

And if we conſider the property here given to God, *viz. Living, but truſt in the living God*; we ſhall ſee good reaſon to truſt in God, rather than in Riches. For our wealth may vaniſh away, but he ever liveth; our wealth may prove our bane, but he is both the giver and preſerver of life. Our truſting in God is here preſſed by an Argument taken from Gods bounty to us in theſe words, *who giveth us richly all things to enjoy*: So that the Lord is not only a *Living* but alſo a *Giving* God, of whoſe gift you have not only your life, but alſo your riches; yea, all that you have is the gift of God, who giveth you not only all needful things, but alſo *Richly*, and as St. *James* ſaith, *liberally*. For God in his gifts ſheweth himſelf to be a God, and that two ways. 1. In the freeneſs. 2. *In the* greatneſs of them, *He loadeth us with benefits*, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*. *This* Rich bounty of God is a further motive to draw you to truſt *in him.*

James 1. 5.

Pſal. 68. 19.

Yea, the Apoſtle addeth, that the Lord giveth us all things richly to *enjoy*; that is, not only for the preſent to ſpend, as being abſolutely neceſſary; but alſo to lay up and reſerve, ſo as it is not unlawful to lay up for after-times. The Apoſtle preſſeth it on Parents as a bounden Duty, *to lay up for their Children.*

2 Cor. 12. 14.

Only let this lawful liberty be limited with theſe and ſuch like bounds.

1. That we lay up nothing but what is juſtly gotten. To lay up Riches of unrighteouſneſs, is to kindle a fire that may deſtroy both our temporal and our ſpiritual eſtate.

2. That we be not ſo covetous of hoarding up, as to deny our ſelves what is needful for our uſe and comfort, or to deny the poor what is needful and neceſſary for them; but that we willingly give out, as what is meet for our ſelves, ſo what is neceſſary to the poor.

3. That in our treaſuring up, we aim not meerly, wholly, and only at our ſelves, but withal have an eye, as to the charge which in particular God hath committed to us, ſo alſo to the Church, Commonwealth, and Poor for the time to come.

4. That we exceed not meaſure in our treaſure, no though we aim at the fore-mentioned good ends.

So much for the clearing the firſt Duty the Apoſtle would have preſſed upon Rich men eſpecially, which is to *Truſt in God.*

The

The ſecond is *Charity towards men*, expreſſed in ſeveral phraſes, as firſt *by doing good.*

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they do good. So that true Charity conſiſteth not only in compaſſionate affections, and kind ſpeeches, but in good deeds, as the word in the Original implieth. ἀγαθοεργεῖν

You Rich men ought *to be rich in good works*, as the Apoſtle addeth. For God expecteth fruit anſwerable to the ſeed which he ſoweth. He giveth you plenty of ſeed, therefore you muſt be plentiful in this kind of fruit.

The next branches, *Ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate*, ſet forth the manner of our charity.

The former implying *a wiſe diſtribution of our Alms*; for *to diſtribute* is not hand over head, without conſideration to give, but according to the need of them to whom we give. The latter implying a willingneſs therein. As by diſtributing, good is done to others; ſo by willingneſs therein, much comfort is brought unto our own ſouls, and grace to the work; and God doth beſt accept ſuch, for *he loveth a chearful willing giver.* 2 Cor. 9. 7.

In the next place follows the Reaſons, to enforce the fore-named Duties taken from the benefit of performing them, which is in brief, aſſurance of eternal life, implied in theſe words, *Laying up in ſtore for themſelves, a good foundation, againſt the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.* The Apoſtle here, for their better encouragement to lay out a portion of their eſtate on good works, telleth them that they are ſo far from loſing what they ſo lay out, as in truth *they lay up thereby in ſtore for themſelves.*

Yea they lay up a good foundation, that is, ſuch a treaſure as is like a foundation in the ground, that cannot be ſhaken nor overthrown. This treaſure the Apoſtle thus expreſſeth, in oppoſition to the fore-mentioned uncertainty of Riches. So as by a chearful diſtribution of this worlds wealth, they do indeed but exchange uncertainties, for certainties, and ſo no fear of loſing by ſuch bargains. Yea, *they thereby obtain eternal life.*

Queſt. *Are then good works the cauſe of eternal life?*

Anſw. Surely, No; only they are the means and way of attaining thereto, and in this ſenſe, is this phraſe here uſed; *That they may lay hold on eternal life*: Having thus ſhewed you the *occaſion* of the words; the *logical Reſolution* of them, their *ſenſe and meaning.*

I ſhould now according to my accuſtomed method, come to ſuch points of Doctrine, which the words do naturally afford unto us; But I

muſt wave them, and fall upon that *Queſtion*, or *caſe of conſcience*, which was given me to handle, *viz.*

Queſt. *How, or after what manner, muſt we give Alms, that they may be acceptable, and pleaſing unto God?* In the reſolving whereof, I ſhall endeavour to anſwer moſt of the caſes of conſcience about Alms-giving.

Anſw. 1. It muſt be *with juſtice*, giving only of our own, whereunto we have a juſt right and title, ſo much our Saviour implieth in that
Luk. 11. 41. precept of his, where he ſaith, *Give alms of ſuch things as you have*, whereby is not meant, ſuch things as a man hath by him (for one may have another mans things by him) but ſuch things are his own, whereunto he hath a juſt title, and undoubted right whereof he is the lawful proprietor, hath the power of diſpoſing thoſe things, and thoſe only he may lawfully and juſtly give away.

This Caveat is very neceſſary for many Reaſons.

1. Becauſe otherwiſe we ſhall ſever mercy from juſtice, which ſhould always go hand in hand. God hath put them together; *Prov.* 21. 21. *Dan.* 4. 27. and we muſt not put them aſunder; indeed they are two links of one and the ſame chain, of which other virtues and graces are alſo other links; So many virtues, ſo many links; Now if one link of a chain fall off, the whole chain is broken, and down falls that which is drawn or held up by it: ſo we that are held up out of the pit of deſtruction by the chains of graces, are in danger to fall into it, if one grace be violated, and ſevered from the reſt.

2. By giving that which is not our own, the excellency and glory of
1 Sam. 4. 21. Charity is loſt, of ſuch Charity it may be ſaid, *Ichabod*, where is the glory? The glory of Charity conſiſts in this, that we are willing to part with our own, and therein to damnifie our ſelves, for the relief and ſuccour of others.

3. By giving that which is not our own, we do wrong, and thereby make our ſelves liable to reſtitution; ſo as charity in ſuch a caſe, is a plain injury. It is a caſe wherein recompence of Revenge may more be feared, than recompence of Reward expected.

Queſt. *Who may be ſaid to give that which is not their own?*

Anſw. They who filch, ſteal, or rob for this very end: As Parents for Children, or Children for Parents, or one friend for another. It is a ſin
Prov. 6. 31. for one to ſteal to ſatisfie his own hunger, much more is it ſin to ſteal for another; certainly it is a great wickedneſs to do injuſtice, that we may do acts of Charity.

2. *Such as having raiſed up an eſtate, or got ſomething by indirect and unjuſt means, as by lying, ſwearing, falſe weights, deceitful meaſures, and the like:*

like; think to make up all by giving part to the Poor. For as the *Civilians* say well, *The good use doth not justifie, the unjust getting of their goods.* And can any imagine that God will be pleased with those mens charity, who give relief out of that which they have wrongfully gotten? restitution should rather be made to such as have been wronged. And if neither the parties wronged, nor their heirs can be found, then what hath been wrongfully got, ought to be given to the Poor, as their heirs. An example whereof we have in *Zachæus*, who having wronged many by oppression, after his conversion, offereth four-fold restitution unto all whom he had wronged, and because many could not be found, to whom he should make it, he offereth to bestow half of his goods to the relief of the poor.

Bonus usus non justificat injuste quæsita.

Luk. 19. 8.

3. *Such as being under authority, and having no propriety in the things which they give, do notwithstanding give directly against, or simply without the consent of those who have the true propriety, do not give of their own,* Servants, Children, and others. Indeed Servants, and Children, may lawfully give out of that which is their own, but not out of that which is their Masters, or Parents, without their allowance.

4. *Such as being joyned in Partnership with another, and give Alms out of the Common stock without the consent of their Partners, do not give that which is their own.*

5. *Such as are in extream debt, and owe more than they are worth*; We shewed that mercy and justice must go together, yea, justice must go before mercy, and be satisfied before mercy be shewed. They who owe more than they are worth, have nothing at all to give for Alms, such joyn Arrogancy to Injustice, to make shew of a great estate, and yet have none.

I shall close this with a word of advice to such as have a merciful and charitable disposition, above their outward condition and ability; That they use the best diligence they can, by all lawful and warrantable means, to get something to bestow upon charitable uses. Let poor labouring men take so much the more pains, that they may have somewhat to give; let servants spare out of their wages; let such as have no propriety in any thing, but are wholly maintained by them under whom they live, as Children, Apprentices, and others, do what they can to obtain something of their Parents, or other Governours, even for this very end, that they may have something to give. Let such as are in debt, first pay their Debts, and then give Alms. Let such as have any way defrauded others, first make restitution, and then relieve them that are in need. Finally, let such as live at the extent of their estate, and much more, such as live beyond their means, well weigh wherein they may cut off some of their expences to bestow on the Poor.

Eph. 4. 28.

II. Alms-

11. Alms-giving must be *with freedom, and chearfulness*, and not grudgingly; The phrase of *giving Alms*, frequently mentioned in Scripture implyeth as much, for to give, is freely to bestow. In the Law this propriety of *giving*, is plainly expressed, and by the contrary thus explained, *Thou shalt freely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him.* It is also implyed under this phrase, *thou shalt open thy hand wide.* Alms must not be wrested and wrung out of a mans hand, but he must of himself *open his hand*; that is, freely give. The word *wide* addeth emphasis. And in the Gospel we find it commanded by the Apostle, *Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give, not grudgingly, or of necessity, for God loveth a chearful giver.*

Deut. 15. 10.

Verse 11.

2 Cor. 9. 7.

Many motives may be produced to induce us hereunto: as,

1. *The pattern of God our Heavenly Father, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Redeemer.*

All the good that the Father doth, he doth most freely; Who hath first given unto him? The word which is used to set out that which God giveth, signifieth *a free gift*; and he is said to *love us freely*, Hos. 14. 4. *To justifie us freely*, Rom. 3. 24. *and freely to give us all things*, Rom. 8. 32.

Rom. 5. 15, 16 τὸ χάρισμα *id quod gratificando aliquis donat.*

This Reason of Gods love, *The Lord set his love upon you, because he loved you*, doth clearly demonstrate the freeness of it.

Deut. 7. 7, 8.

The good also which the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Saviour doth for us, he doth most freely upon his own love, without any desert of ours: in this respect it is said that he hath *loved us, and hath given himself for us.* The conjunction of these two, *love*, and *giving*, plainly prove the freeness of the gift. But further he expresly saith concerning the freeness of his gift, *I will give unto him that is athirst, of the fountain of the water of life freely.*

Eph 5. 2, 25.

Rev. 21. 5. Ch. 22. 17.

2. A second Motive may be taken *from the nature of Charity which unless it be free, is not true and sound.* Thus much the Apostle implyeth under this phrase, *Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.* By *Charity* he meaneth a free giving of that which is given, meerly out of love and pity to him, unto whom he giveth.

1 Cor. 13. 3.

3. Free giving makes that which is given to man acceptable to God; for *God loveth a chearful giver.* Yea, God hath more respect to this manner of giving, than to the greatness of the gift. *For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.*

2 Cor. 9. 7.

Chap. 8. 12.

4. *A free manner of giving, makes the gift the more acceptable to him that is made partaker thereof.* As the gift supplieth his want, so the manner of giving reviveth his spirit. The Apostle rejoyceth in the Lord greatly, upon

upon that care which the *Philippians* ſhewed to him in his neceſſity. Phil. 4. 10.

5. *A free and chearful giving much redoundeth to the glory of God*, in that others are ſtirred up to praiſe God for ſuch gifts. *David* praiſed Gods glorious name, when he ſaw his people offer willingly unto the Lord. And this in reſpect the Apoſtle ſaith of ſuch benevolence, that it is *abundant by many thankſgivings unto God*. 1 Chron. 28. 13. 14. 2 Cor. 9. 2. & 12.

III *With ſimplicity and ſincerity*; according to that of the Apoſtle, *He that giveth, let him do it with ſimplicity*; that is, with an honeſt, plain, and ſincere heart, not aiming therein at his own praiſe, or applauſe, but at the glory of God, doing it in obedience to his command. This ſimplicity in giving, our Saviour hinteth unto us, where he ſaith, *When thou doſt Alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth*: that is, let not the neareſt that may be unto thee know what thou giveſt. The right hand is that hand wherewith we ordinarily give, yet the left hand is often aſſiſtant to it. Now though there ſhould be any ſo near unto thee, as to be helpful and aſſiſtant, or at hand, yet let them not know it; make known thy charity to none. Rom. 12. 8. Mat. 6. 3.

Queſt. *May we not give Alms if others be by?*

Anſw. Yea, if need ſo require; as at publick Collections, or when in publick we ſee one ſtand in need. But we may not do it with a mind to have it known, our mind muſt be free from all ſuch conceit, and we muſt ſo do it, as if we were alone. *That Alms is not unacceptable which is given and ſeen of men, but that which is given to be ſeen of men.* So that the ſcope of our Saviour in the fore-mentioned place, is to take us off from all vain glory, in giving of our Alms, that as much as in us lieth we ſhould endeavour to hide and conceal our good works from the eye of the world. *Non eſt ingrata eleemoſyna quæ fit & videtur, ſed quæ fit ut videatur.*

IV. Our Alms muſt be given *with a compaſſionate heart, with bowels of affection.* The *Greek* word for *Alms* is derived from a word that ſignifies *Mercy*, which intimateth the diſpoſition of the giver, how he ſhould be a *merciful* man, whoſe bowels are moved at the miſery of another, and thereupon contributes to his need with bowels of compaſſion. ἐλεημοσύνη ab ἔλεος miſericordia.

In giving we muſt not onely open our hands, but our hearts alſo in pity and compaſſion; We *muſt draw out our own ſouls* (as the Prophet ſpeaketh) as well as *our purſes, to the hungry and afflicted*; which is implied under ſeveral expreſſions of Charity, uſed in Scripture by the Holy; Pſal. 58. 10.

Prov. 14. 21. Chap. 19. 17. Col. 3. 12. 1 Joh. 3. 17. ly Ghost, as *He that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he.* And again, *He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord.* And saith the Apostle Saint *Paul, Put on, as the Elect of God, bowels of mercy.* And saith the beloved Disciple St. *John, Who so hath this worlds goods, and seeth his Brother hath need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?* It is not sufficient to have an open, liberal hand, unless we have also an open and compassionate heart; for if the Sacrifice of our Alms-deeds be not mingled with the oyl and incense of mercy and compassion, it will not be acceptable unto God, who will have Mercy as well as Sacrifice. In contributing therefore to the relief of the poor; let our *inward affection*, go along with our *outward action.*

Beneficentia ex benevolentia manare debet. Affectus tuus nomen imponit operi tuo. Amb. Offic. 30.

As helps hereunto,

1. *Be well informed in the benefit that compassion bringeth*, and that not only to thy distressed Brother, who is succoured, but also to thy self, to whom in this case a promise of mercy is made; *Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy:* Mercy from other men, and mercy from God himself.

Mat. 5 7.

Eccl. 9. 2. 2. *Well weigh the common condition of all*, how *All things come alike to all*; as the Wise-man speaketh, so as thou also art subject to the same distress whereunto others are brought; and therefore as *Aquinas* saith, we should have compassion on other mens misery, *for the possibility of suffering the like*; Which argument the Apostle useth to the *Hebrews*, saying, *Remember them which suffer adversity, as being your selves also in the body*; that is, say some, as being members of the same body, but rather, as *Beza* and others interpret the place, *as being your selves in the body of flesh and frailty, subject to the like miseries*; for so long as we dwell here in these houses of Clay, and carry about us this earthly Tabernacle, we are all subject to the like changes and chances; which made old learned *Theodoret*, to reach his helping-hand to those out-cast *Africans*, *For when I saw* (quoth he) *their pitiful estate, I began to day to heart the doubtful turnings and inversions of humane things, and to fear lest I my self might fall into the like evils.*

Propter possibilitatem similia patiendi. Tho. 2a, 2ae, quest. 3. art. 2. Heb. 13. 3. *Ut qui sitis & ipsi iisdem calamitatibus obnoxii.* Beza in loc. Theod. Ep. 29.

V. Our Alms must be given *seasonably*; for as the Wise-man speaketh, *To every thing there is a season, and every thing is beautiful only in its time and season*; And therefore it will be our wisdom so to observe the needs and necessities of other men, that we do not let slip any season, or opportunity of doing good. According to the exhortation of the Apostle, *As we have opportunity, let us do good.* The word in the Original translated *opportunity*, properly signifies a *seasonable time.*

Eccl. 3. 1. 11.

Gal. 6. 10. καιρὸν.

Quest. *Which are the most seasonable times of doing works of mercy?*

Answ. 1. When accidentally thou meetest with any fit objects of mercy,

mercy, thou muſt not then paſs them by with the *Prieſt* and *Levite*, but with the good *Samaritan*, preſently pour the Oyl and Wine of thy charity into the wounds of thy Brother, forthwith contributing ſomewhat to his relief; For miſery being the proper object of mercy, thou ſhouldſt then extend thy mercy unto ſuch as are in want and miſery. Luk. 10. 31, 32, 33, 34.

2. *When God by his providence hath any way bleſſed and encreaſed thy ſtock and ſtore*, by proſpering thy adventure at Sea, or thy trading at home, or by ſome great Legacy bequeathed thee by ſome of thy friends, that is a ſeaſonable time for thee to give out freely and liberally to the relief of the poor, in teſtimony of thy thankfulneſs unto God for his bounty towards thee. I know it is uſual with moſt men upon the encreaſe of their ſtock and ſtore, to ſacrifice to their own nets, to aſcribe their wealth to their own wit and policy, and to ſay in their hearts, *Their power, and the might of their hand hath gotten them this wealth.* But mark what *Moſes* ſaith in the next verſe, 18. *Thou ſhalt remember the Lord thy God, it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth.* Seeing therefore what thou haſt, thou haſt received from God, whatſoever the means and inſtruments were of conveying it unto thee, is it not moſt juſt and equal, that in way of thankfulneſs thou ſhouldſt ſet apart ſome portion thereof for the poor & needy? Deut. 8. 17.

3. *The Lords Day is another ſeaſonable time of doing works of mercy*, according to the Apoſtles Rule and Direction; *Now concerning the collection for the Saints, as I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, even ſo do ye. Upon the firſt day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in ſtore, as God hath proſpered him.* Where by *the firſt day of the week* is meant, the *Lords Day*, on which the Apoſtle enjoyneth the *Corinthians to lay up ſomething in ſtore*; implying thereby, that that is a very fit ſeaſon, not only to do ſuch works of mercy, which are then offered unto us, but alſo to prepare for other times. 1 Cor. 16. 1, 2.

4. *Days of Thanksgiving* for ſome eminent mercy, are another ſeaſonable time of doing works of Mercy. The remembering of the poor at ſuch times is expreſly commanded in Scripture; *Thou ſhalt rejoyce in thine heart, thou, and thy Son, and thy Daughter, and thy Man-ſervant, and thy Maid ſervant, and the Levites, the Stranger, and the Fatherleſs, and the Widow*: Here the Stranger, the Fatherleſs, the Widow, are commanded to rejoyce on their days of Feaſting, which pre ſuppoſeth the Rich mens ſending portions of their good cheer unto them, which was the practice of the people of God, as appeareth by that command of *Nehemiah* to the *Jews* on a day of Thankſgiving; *Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the ſweet, and ſend portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared.* And their day of thankſgiving from *Haman's* conſpiracy, is called *a day of feaſting*, Deut. 16. 14. Neh. 8. 10. Eſth. 9. 22.

feasting, and of sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor. And what more seasonable time can there be for shewing mercy to the poor, than when we are blessing God for his manifold mercies vouchsafed unto us?

5. *Days of Fasting and Prayer*, are another seasonable time of doing works of mercy. For how can we expect that God should shew mercy unto us in removing those judgments which we feel, or in preventing those which we fear; if we will not shew mercy to our poor Brethren, who stand in need of our relief? In the day of our fasting therefore, let us at least give away to the poor, so much as we save by our Fast. For as St. *Austin* in one of his Sermons saith, * *Then are our fasts acceptable to God, if they which fast out of necessity, because they want meat, be relieved by us.* Let this therefore be always observed by us, that the poor have the gain of our fasting, and not our own purses.

* *Tum grata sunt Deo nostra jejunia, si illi qui necessitate jejunant reficiantur à nobis.* Aug. Serm. de Temp. 64.

VI. Our Alms must be given *readily and speedily*, without any needless delay; according to the counsel of the Wiseman, *With-hold not good from them to whom it is due*; that is, with-hold not any act of Charity from those who stand in need of thy help, * *Say not unto thy Neighbour, go and come again, and to morrow I will give thee, when thou hast it by thee*: he that so delayeth his helping hand, is next door to him that denieth. And therefore as any occasion offers it self unto us, let us speedily embrace the same, as knowing that a speedy giver, is a double benefactor, and the swifter that a benefit cometh, the sweeter it tasteth. And contrariwise a benefit loseth its grace that sticketh to his fingers who is about to bestow it. What then shall we think of their charity, who put off all to their death-beds, never giving any thing considerable to the Poor, till they can keep it no longer? these though by their *last will* and testament they give somewhat to the poor, yet questionless it is *against their wills*; for could they have kept it longer, they would not have parted with it.

Prov. 3. 27.

* *Qui sic moratur, neganti proximus est.* Senec. de benefic. l. 2. c. 5.

Beneficia non sunt procrastinanda, sed tempestive danda, utmagis prodesse possint. Bis dat, qui cito dat. Ingratum est beneficium quod diu inter manus dantis hæsit. Senec. de Benef.

I shall desire such seriously to consider, these six things;

1. That if all Rich men should do thus, the poor would soon be starved for want of bread.

2. That this practise of theirs, is against the express command of God, who requireth us to do good, and communicate out of our store, while we have time and opportunity.

Gal. 6. 10. Mat. 5. 16.

3. That they have no assurance of the continuance of their wealth. For as the wiseman speaketh, *Riches many times make themselves wings, they flye away as an Eagle towards Heaven*; they have *Eagles wings* to flye from us. And how many are there, who have out-lived a fair estate? If God in his displeasure blasts a mans substance; it vanisheth away in a moment.

Prov. 23. 5. *Alas Aquilinæ.*

4. Though

4. Though their Riches ſhould continue with them, even to their deaths? yet they have no aſſurance that God will give them grace to be liberal at their deaths, who had never the goodneſs to be charitable in their life-time.

5. That they have no aſſurance that God will accept of their Death-bed charity: what St. *Auſtin* ſpeaketh of Death-bed Repentance, that *it is ſeldom true and hearty*; The ſame may I ſay of Death-bed Charity, it is ſeldom true and hearty, but for the moſt part rotten and hypocritical, proceeding from ill grounds, as vain-glory, conceit of merit, and the like.

6. That they have no aſſurance of the true performance of their will, that the poor ſhall be the better for what is thereby given them. For how many *Executors* have proved moſt unfaithful to their truſts, whereby many charitable gifts have been clean perverted. And if friends be ſo unfaithful, to us in our life-time; how can we but queſtion their fidelity after our deaths? Oh therefore that all, whom the Lord hath bleſſed with an eſtate, would in their life time become their own *Adminiſtrators*, making (as one ſaith) their *own hands* their *Executors*, and their *own eyes* their *Overſeers*. For queſtionleſs that charity which is exerciſed in a mans life-time is the beſt, and moſt acceptable unto God.

VII. Our Alms muſt be *bountiful* and *liberal*, giving out proportionably to what the Lord hath given unto us. This is implyed in that command of God to his people, *Thou ſhalt open thine hand wide unto thy Brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy in the Land*; that is, thou ſhalt give unto him bountifully and liberally. And our Apoſtle here in the Text, would have rich men charged *to be rich in good works, even as God hath given them all things richly to enjoy*; *For unto whomſoever much is given, of him much ſhall be required.* And therefore the ſame Apoſtle adviſeth the *Corinthians* to *give, as God hath proſpered them*: To whom God hath given little of this worlds goods, of them he requireth but little, but to whom he hath given much, of them he requireth much. Rich men therefore muſt not only give a portion of their wealth to the relief of others, but alſo in ſome fit proportion to their eſtate.

Deut. 15. 11. 1 Tim. 6. 18. Luk. 12. 48. 1 Cor. 16. 2.

Queſt. *If any ſhall aſk, What is that portion or proportion of eſtate, which rich men ought to ſet apart for Charitable uſes?*

Anſ. It is an hard matter to determine the quantity and proportion of mens charity, the Scripture being ſilent herein, leaving this to the diſcretion and ingenuity of the prudent Chriſtian. As the Apoſtle ſpeaketh, *Every man according as he purpoſeth in his heart, ſo let him give*, &c. *A certain quantity is not ſet him, that is left to the free purpoſe of his own heart.* 2 Cor. 9. 7.

But yet though the Scripture giveth us no direct *precept* in this particular; it holdeth forth many *preſidents* for our imitation; as that of *Jacob*, who in teſtimony of his thankfulneſs unto God for what he ſhould beſtow upon him, Vowed the tenth part thereof unto God for pious and charitable uſes. *And Jacob vowed a vow unto God, ſaying, Of all that thou ſhalt give me, I will ſurely give the tenth unto thee.* Of *Cornelius* it is recorded, that *he gave much Alms.* And the *Macedonians* are highly commended for their great bounty, and large contributions. Theſe examples are left upon record for our imitation. For as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh, *whatſoever things were written afore-time, were written for our learning, and for our admonition.* So that though the *quantity* of our Alms, how much we ſhould give, is not expreſſly ſet down; yet this we find both *commanded* and *commended*, by *precepts* and *preſidents*, in the Scripture, that we give *liberally* and *bountifully* in ſome fit proportion to our eſtates; that if we be rich in this worlds goods, we ſhould then be rich in good works; *ſowing liberally, that ſo we may reap liberally.*

Gen. 28. 20, 22.
Acts 10. 20.
2 Cor. 8. 3.
Rom. 15. 4.
1 Cor. 10. 11.
2 Cor. 9. 6.

Now that our Alms may be liberal, it muſt be fitted to two things, *viz.*

1. The Neceſſity of the Receiver.
2. The Ability of the Giver.

That in giving we ſhould have reſpect to the need and neceſſity of our Brother; The Law is clear, which ſaith, *If there be among you a poor man of one of thy Brethren, thou ſhalt open thy hand wide unto him, and ſhalt give him ſufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth.* That we ſhould likewiſe have reſpect to *our own Ability*, the Apoſtle St. *Peter* is as clear, where he ſaith, *If any man miniſter, let him do it as of the Ability which God giveth*; that is, let every one give with reſpect to his own eſtate and ability. Notwithſtanding in caſes of urgent neceſſity, and great extremity, we are to ſtrain our ſelves even above our ability.

Deut. 15. 7, 8.
1 Pet. 4. 11.

Here it may not be impertinent to anſwer another queſtion (for I reſolve to contrive all I have to deliver upon this ſubject into this plain and eaſie method) and that is this.

Queſt. *How many ways may rich men exerciſe their charity?*

Anſ. 1. By *laying out a portion of their eſtate in ſuch a way as directly tends to the worſhip of God, the advancement of Religion, the ſalvation of mens ſouls*; which I may not unfitly term, *A Spiritual Charity.*

And this may alſo be done ſeveral ways. As

1. *By contributing towards the planting and propagating the Goſpel where it hath not been.* A work ſet on foot by divers in *New England*, but chiefly carried on by the charity of well-diſpoſed people here in *Old England.*

2. *By ſetting up, and maintaining of Lectures*; the preaching of the Word

Word being the ordinary means appointed by God for the bringing of sinners to the knowledg of Jesus Christ, *whom to know is life eternal.* Rom. 1. 16.

3. *By adding to the maintenance of such setled Preachers, whose pains are great, and means small,* through the covetousnes of Impropriators, who ingross to themselves what doth more properly belong to the Minister.

4. *By maintaining of poor Scholars at the University in reference to the work of the Ministry,* that so there may be a continual supply of learned, godly, and Orthodox Ministers, for the edifying of the Body of Christ.

5. *By bestowing of Bibles on poor Children,* whereby through the care of their Parents, they may be acquainted *with the knowledg of the holy Scriptures, which are able to make them wise unto salvation.* 2 Tim. 3. 15. Memorable is the famous gift of Sir *John Fenner*, who by his last Will gave six pounds *per annum* to several out-Parishes in *London*, for the buying of Bibles, to be distributed among poor Children. From my own experience I can say, that this gift hath occasioned many poor people to teach their children to read, that so they might be capable of those Bibles, which are to be given only to such as can in some measure read.

6. *By erecting of Countrey-Schools,* and endowing them with some competent maintenance, for teaching of poor mens Children, who have not wherewithal to pay for their schooling, which will be a special means not only to further their civil, but likewise their spiritual education For thereby they will be made more capable of Divine instruction. Experience teacheth us how ineffectual the most powerful Ministry is upon an ignorant and unlearned Congregation. Questionless therefore the erecting of Countrey-schools is a work of charity, more noble in it self, more acceptable unto God, and more beneficial to the Kingdom, than the building of Alms-houses, who are too often filled with swarms of idle drones. But though this *Spiritual Charity* is questionless the more excellent, as tending to a more excellent object, namely, the souls of our neighbors, yet the bodies of our neighbours must be cared for as well as their souls: Our Charity therefore must also extend to them, and in this kind it may be practised and expressed. *Docere simpliciter est melius quam pascere,* Aquin. 2a, 2æ. quæst. 32.

II. *By a free and liberal giving to the relief of those who are in want,* of which I have already largely spoken.

III. *By a ready lending to such, as being in a Calling, want stock, or other means to help themselves in their Trades.* This Duty of *lending* we find expressly *commanded both in the Law,* and *in the Gospel*; in the Law, as in the place before quoted; *Thou shalt open thine hand wide to thy poor Brother, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth,* &c. Deut. 15. 7, 8. In the *Gospel*; *Lend* (saith our Saviour) *looking for nothing again*; that is, Luke 6. 35.

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lend not only to such from whom you may hope, by reason of their ability, to receive your own again; but also to such, as by reason of their poverty may perhaps never be able to repay you. The *Psalmist* maketh this a note of a *righteous and a good man*, that *he is ever merciful and lendeth*; *that he sheweth favour and lendeth*. Where we see it is set down as the property of such a man, that he is ready to lend to the poor, to such as stand in need of his help; and that freely, without hope of gain.

Psal. 37. 26, Psal. 112. 5.

This Duty belongeth especially to Rich men, because the occasions of him that would borrow, usually require more than meaner persons can well spare, they can better give a penny, than lend a pound; though in many cases the lending our Brother a considerable sum together, would be more beneficial to him, than it may be to give him half as much, there is therefore a noble and very generous act of Charity to be exercised this way, & it is peculiar to rich men, who have it by them wherewithal to do it.

IV. Rich men may and ought to express their Charity, *by forgiving a debt, in case the borrower be not able to repay it.*

There be many who by the help of that which is lent them, God blessing their pains in the employments thereof, are able to repay *what is lent.* If there were not hope thereof, men would rather give than lend to such.

But there are others, who notwithstanding their care and pains in their Calling, thrive not; or by some accident suffer such loss and damage, as they are not able to repay what they have borrowed. In such cases Creditors are bound to forgive (at least to forbear) their debtors. This is the intendment of that charge, *Lend, hoping for nothing again.* To take this phrase simply, is to alter the nature of lending, and to turn it into giving. Herein lyeth the difference betwixt *Lending*, and *Giving: Lending* is on condition to have again that which is lent, or at least the worth of it some other way: *Giving* is free, without any such condition. That advice of Christ, to *lend hoping for nothing again*, hath respect to the mind of the Lender, that he should not have his mind wholly and only upon the repaying of what he lendeth; but on the need of his brother He is not simply to lend, because he is perswaded he shall lose nothing, but have his own again. He is to lend, because he doth therein great kindness to his Brother, who stands in much need thereof,

Luk. 6. 35.

ἀπελπίζοντες ἐλπίζειν sperare; ἀπορεῖν desperare.

The *Greek* word properly signifieth to *despair*, and so it may here be taken; as if he had said, when your Brother hath need to borrow, lend, though his case be such that you even despair of receiving it again, though you run some hazzard of losing the principal.

If therefore it so fall out, that the debtor be not able to repay what he borrowed, forgive it him. He lends hoping for nothing again, who

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is willing to forgive in case the necessity of the borrower require it. This was it which *Nehemiah* enjoyned the rich Jews. Excellently doth our Lord press this Duty in the parable of the two Creditors, where we have a commendable pattern of a certain King, that in such a case forgave a great debt; and of the sore revenge he executed on one of his servants, because he did not in like manner forgive his fellow servant. Nehem. 5. 11. Mat. 18. 23.

In the Old-Testament it is commended to us under the phrase *of restoring the pledge:* A pledge was a pawn left by a debtor with his creditor, for assurance to repay the debt. Restoring the pledge when the debt was not paid, was an evidence of remitting the debt. Ezek. 18, 7. & 33. 1. 5. Gen. 38. 17, 18

V. *By Hospitality*, which consisteth not so much in a loving entertainment of kindred, friends, and neighbours, as of strangers; as the word in the *Greek* importeth. φιλοξενία compounded of φιλεῖν & ξένος Hospitalitas est species liberalitatis qua peregrinos & hospites ac præsertim propter veræ Doctrinæ professionem exsulantes, verâ benevolentia, & aliquibus officiis hospitalitatis prosequimur, Ursin. Cat. φιλοξενία ἔστι φιλεγχία τε καὶ χρῆσις ξένων. Clemens, Alexand.

This is that hospitality; which is both commanded and commended to us in the holy Scripture. It is commanded in those known Precepts of the Apostle St. *Paul*, Rom. 12. 13. *Be given to Hospitality, and be not forgetful to entertain strangers*, *Heb.* 13. 2. Which is as much as to say, *Forget not Hospitality*, which is an entertaining of strangers. And the Apostle St. *Peter* commands the faithful to whom he writes, *to use hospitality without grudging or repining.* 1 Pet. 4. 9.

It is *commended* to us in the practice of Gods people; as of *Abraham*, of whom it is recorded, that he sate at his Tent-door looking and waiting as it were for strangers to entertain them; and so soon as he saw three men, whom he took for such, he ran to invite them. And of *Lot*, that as he sate in the gate of *Sodom*, he saw two whom he conceived to be strangers, *them he exceedingly prest to turn into his house, where he made them a feast.* And of the *Shunamite* woman, and her husband, who shewed themselves hospitable to the Prophet *Elisha*, *as oft as he passed by their house.* We have *Jobs* testimony of himself, *The stranger*, said he, *did not lodge in the streets, but I opened my door to the traveller*: Which words set out *Jobs* great hospitality, who kept open house for all Passengers. In those days there was no common Inn for the entertainment of strangers, and therefore they must have lyen out of doors, if some good men had not entertained them. Gen 18. 1. 3. Gen. 19. 3. 2 King. 4 8. Job 31. 32.

Having such and so many presidents of hospitality, let us strive to follow them, labouring to write after their Copy, knowing assuredly that our

our labour of love and cost therein shall not be in vain. For I may truly say, it is a fruitful, and gainful course of liberality, never did any lose by it. *Some hereby have entertained Angels*, as the Apostle speaketh; *Be not*
Heb. 13. 2. *forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained Angels unaware.* In setting down this recompence the Apostle hath an especial re-
Gen. 18. 2. spect unto two instances, one of *Abraham*, the other of *Lot*.
Chap. 19. 1. Angels came to both these, in the appearance of men, whom they knew not, which sheweth Gods high account of this Duty, in that once and again he sent Angels, to such as were ready to entertain strangers.

Yea, we may entertain Christ himself, and indeed in every entertainment of a poor godly stranger, Christ himself is entertained. And therefore in the great day of Judgment, we read that Christ puts in this good
Mat. 25. 35. work by name; *I was a stranger and ye took me in*; Jesus Christ is a stranger in his members.

In sacred Scriptures we find several others rewarded for their Hospitality; as,

Gen. 24. 22, 49. *Rebeckah* for her courtesie to *Abrahams* servant, a meer stranger to her, was rewarded with precious gifts and a good Husband. The *Shunamites*
2 Kings 4. Hospitality to the Prophet, was recompenced with giving her a Son, and restoring him to life. *The Widow of Sareptahs* hospitality to the Prophet *Elijah*, in receiving him into her house in a great famine, was rewarded with preserving and increasing her Meal and Oyl, for it is expressly said,
1 King. 17. 16. that *her barrel of meal wasted not, neither did her cruse of Oyl fail, until the Lord sent plenty of food.*

Rom. 16. 23. *Gaius* his hospitality towards St. *Paul* in receiving him into his house,
1 Joh. 5. 6. was recompenced with an honourable Testimony, which both St. *Paul* and St. *John* gave of him.

Object. Some may object and say, Instead of a Godly man I may happily entertain some dissembling Hypocrite, and so lose both my gift and reward?

Answ. 1. Our Charity ought to hope the best of every one,
1 Cor. 13. 7. of whom we have no evident proof, or presumption, to the contrary.

2. If we receive a distressed Minister, in the Name of a Minister of Christ, or Private distressed Christian, in the name of a Righteous man, supposing him to belong to Christ; let him be what he will, we shall neither lose gift, nor reward, Christ hath undertaken the payment thereof.

V. Rich men may and ought in some cases to express their Charity, even *by selling what they have, for the relief of others*, according

cording to that of our Saviour, *Sell that ye have and give Alms.* Luke 12. 33.

Quest. *In what cases must rich men sell their estates, or any part of them for the relief of others?*

Answ. 1. *When they are extraordinarily called thereunto,* as he that asked Christ, what he should do to inherit eternal life? Christ said unto him, *Sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor.* That which the *Apostles did in leaving their Callings to follow Christ,* was equivalent to selling their possessions. Mat. 10 17, 21. Mat. 19. 27.

2. *When they have defrauded and oppressed others,* and are rebuked for that sin, or otherwise brought to repentance for the same, they ought to testifie the truth of their repentance, by a full restitution, though it be by parting with their possession. Thus did the *Jews after their Captivity restore to their poor Brethren, whom they had oppressed with Usury, their lands and their houses,* &c. The instance of *Zacheus* tendeth also to this purpose, who promiseth to give the half of his goods to the poor. Neh. 5. 11, 12. Luke 19 8.

3. *When there are such a multitude of indigent persons in the Church, as the superfluity of such as are rich is not sufficient to relieve them.* In this case, *Christians in the primitive* Church *that were possessors of lands, or houses, sold them, and brought the price of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the Apostles feet, and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.* Acts 4. 34, 35.

These particular cases, being all of them somewhat extraordinary, do not patronize the Platonical and familistical conceit of *Community of Goods.*

Which fond mistake of theirs, these arguments amongst others may sufficiently confute, and evince propriety in lands and possessions to be lawful now in the times of the Gospel.

1. In those very times wherein Christians for use, had all things common, S. *Peter* expressly saith to *Ananias* concerning the Lands which he sold, *whilst it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power?* Hereby it is manifest, that men then had a propriety in Goods and Lands. Acts 5. 4.

2. The duties prescribed to rich men in the words of my Text, *to do good, to be ready to distribute, and willing to communicate,* prove as much.

3. The many admonitions to pay *Debts,* to give tribute, and perform other like Duties of Justice, do imply a propriety of Goods.

4. Exhortations also to *Lend,* and to *Sell,* prove as much. For men may not lend, nor sell that wherein they have not a propriety. Luke 6. 35. Chap. 12. 41.

1. Their trade of life is no warrantable calling. It is a *disorderly walking*, which is expressly taxed by the Apostle; for saith he, *When we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all.* It cannot be said of those, *As the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk*; or, *let every man abide in the same Calling wherein he was called.* God hath called none to such a trade.

2 Thes. 3. 10, 11

1 Cor. 7. 17, 20

2. They are as drones in a hive of Bees; they live of the labours of others, but bring in nothing to the stock, as all the other Bees do. They are as barren Trees, which receive sap from the earth, but yield no fruit; unprofitable burthens of the earth, whose sad doom ye may read, *Luke* 13. 7.

Telluris inutile pondus.

3. Many of them are of no particular Church, nor of any civil society, but out of all Government in Church and State. In this and the former respect they may justly be stiled *Children of Belial*, without yoak.

Deut. 13. 13.

4. They with-hold, and in a manner rob the state wherein they dwell, of their labour and pains. The State or Kingdom is as a body, all that dwell therein are as so many members; now nature teacheth every member to do somewhat for the benefit of the whole. These, doing nothing thereto, sin against the light of Nature.

5. They who are truly poor shall by this means be neglected and scanted, whilst these lazy drones devour that which of right belongeth unto them.

Qui largiuntur indignis ea quæ dignis conferri debebant, tria committunt absurda.

1. *Nam & ipsi jacturam faciunt.*

2. *Et in bonos contumeliosi sunt.*

3. *Et malos roborant materia vitiorum suppedita.*

6. They are a great scandal and shame to the Government of the Nation wherein they are. For their course of life implieth that no good provision is made for the poor; nor order taken to set such as are able to work, and to relieve such as are impotent. Now it is a great sin to be a shame to ones own Country.

7. Their kind of life is sensual and bruitish; for as brutes they spend all their days in seeking food for their bodies.

From hence it followeth, that they, who relieve such, make themselves accessary to the fore-mentioned sins.

There are some allegations made for relieving such; but they are undue allegations, and may easily be answered; The chiefest of them is this.

Luke 6. 30.

1. Christ commandeth to *give to every man that asketh thee.*

Answ. To this I answer, that the Precept is to be taken in reference to a false position of the Pharisees, which was this, that their Countrymen

men and friends only were their Neighbours, whom by the Law they were bound to love. That this was their opinion, is evident by this their gloss on the Law; *Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.* Mat. 5. 43. And by the Parable which Christ produceth to demonstrate to the Lawyer who was his Neighbour. In opposition to that false doctrine, Christ commands to *give*, not to friends only, but *to every man.* Luke 10. 29, 30, &c. So as the scope of that precept is, to take away respect of persons in Alms-giving: that we should not restrain this Duty of Charity to Country-men, kindred, and friends; but extend it also to strangers, enemies, and to every one, that being in need crave it of us.

2. A second Allegation is, *That many beggars may perish if they be not relieved.*

Answ. In case of necessity they may and must be relieved, either at doors, in streets, or other like places, where their necessity is manifested. Necessity (as we speak) hath no Law. It dispences with ordinary Rules. Instance that which Christ produced concerning *David. He entred into the House of God, and did eat the shew-bread, which was not lawful.* Mat. 12. 4.

I have done with the *Question* alloted to me, give me leave to add a few words, for the more profitable pressing this most necessary, but much neglected Duty of Charity; I shall dispatch my intendment herein.

1. By shewing you by what means you may obtain this Grace.

2. Give you some Motives to quicken you up to a conscionable performance of the works of it.

The means are these,

1. *Meditation*: Seriously meditate,

1. Of the *Necessity* of it, which ariseth from the Lords express charge and command, unto which we are bound to yield obedience. It is often commanded both in the Old and New Testament. That I may not be tedious, I shall give you but two or three proofs, *Deut.* 15. 11. A place I often mentioned for the excellency, and exceeding pertinency of it to this purpose. Saith the Lord to his people there; *The poor shall never cease out of the Land; Therefore I command thee, saying, thou shalt open thy hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy in the Land;* that is, thou shalt give unto him freely and bountifully. And saith our Saviour in the New Testament; *Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away,* Luke 5. 42. And saith the Apostle, *To do good, and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased;* Heb. 13. 16. in which words he presseth the Duty with.

with a forcible Motive; for who would not do that which is well-pleaſing unto God, who is bountiful in rewarding the leaſt good we do upon his command.

This duty of Alms-given being ſo expreſly commanded in Scripture, it is not in our power to omit or neglect the ſame; neither can any creature give us a diſpenſation againſt the Creators command. A Prophet ſtileth omiſſion of that which God enjoyneth to be done (yea though that omiſſion were but in part, and that upon a fair pretence) *Rebellion, which is as the ſin of witchcraft and ſtubbornneſs,* 1 Sam. 15. 23. *which is as iniquity and idolatry.* Againſt him who failed in performing the charge enjoyned him (though he were a King) this doom is denounced, *becauſe thou haſt rejected the Word of the Lord, he hath alſo* Verſ. 26. *rejected thee from being King.* In like manner may God reject ſuch as neglect this Duty of *Charity*, when he calls them to it, from being Kings, and reigning in Heaven. We have a manifeſt inſtance thereof, *Mat.* 25. 41, 42, 43.

Now the giving of Alms being a Duty ſo expreſly commanded *in* the holy Scriptures, it cannot therefore be accounted a matter *meerly* arbitrary, left to a mans own will, to give or not to give. But it is a bounden duty, which they that in any competent meaſure can do, muſt not omit, which conſideration cannot but be a ſtrong incitation unto us, to make conſcience of this Duty of Alms-giving, as occaſion is offered, and not to over-ſlip opportunities, that by the Divine providence are offered unto us. Should we neglect that which our Lord hath expreſly commanded? that whereunto by vertue of that command we are bound? that whereof we are to give an account? Let us upon the Lords commands do what in this kind we can: And when we have done Luk. 17. 10. what we can, ſay, *We are unprofitable ſervants, we have done what was our duty to do.*

2. Of the *Equity* of this Duty of Alms-giving. It is a moſt equal thing, that he who hath wherewithal, ſhould give to him that hath not. The equity ariſeth both from the divine providence, and alſo from the inſtability of mans ſtate and condition.

1. God for this end gives more to ſome than to others, that they who have more abundance, ſhould give out of their abundance to them who are in want. This was typically ſignified by the gathering of *Manna*, which though it were rained down from Heaven, yet the Lord would not allow, that they who had gathered much, even more than was needful for themſelves, and their houſhold, ſhould hoard up their ſuperfluity, but enjoyned them to communicate of their abundance, to ſuch

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ſuch as had not enough. The which the Apoſtle applieth to the giving of Alms out of our abundance to thoſe who want; which he ſtileth *equality*. 2 Cor. 8. 14.

2. Mans ſtate is ſo variable, as he who now hath, may quickly want; and in want deſire to be ſuccoured by ſuch as have. It is thereupon moſt equal, that they who would be ſuccoured in their need, ſhould be willing to ſuccour the need of others. This equity doth Chriſt himſelf preſs; *all things whatſoever ye would that men ſhould do to you, do ye even ſo to them.* And as a ground to enforce this the further, he addeth, *for this is the Law and the Prophets.* Hereby implying, that this doctrine is contained in the Law and the Prophets; but that is not all, theſe words, *this is the Law and the Prophets*, intend that the ſum of the Law and the Prophets conſiſteth therein; and the main ſcope of them tendeth thereunto; namely ſo far as they contain the duties of man to man. So evident is the equity hereof even by the light of nature, as the very heathen who wanted the light of Gods word diſcerned it. Well therefore might the Apoſtle enforce this duty of charity upon this ground, thus, *Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them*, that is, be helpful to others which cannot help themſelves, as you would have others afford ſuccour unto you, if you were ſuccourleſs. Mat. 7. 12. Heb. 13. 3.

3. *Meditate of the manifold ſingular benefits which do follow and accompany a conſcionable performance of this duty*; For thereby we diſcharge our duty to God, who requireth it at our hands, and as a conſequent thereof we ſhall glorifie God; for it tends much to his praiſe and glory, when in ſuch works as himſelf hath commanded, his children teſtifie their obedience and thankfulneſs; and therefore ſaith our Saviour, *Herein is my Father glorified, if ye bring forth much fruit.* Joh. 15. 8.

And by our Charity, as we ſhall grace and adorn our holy profeſſion, ſo we ſhall ſtop the mouths of wicked men from ſpeaking any evil of us or of our profeſſion; for how are men apt to ſpeak of us, and of our profeſſion, according to the fruits we bring forth, and the good works which we do.

And as we ſhall thereby comfort, and make glad the hearts of the poor and diſtreſſed; ſo we ſhall refreſh our own ſouls, in that our works of Charity will evidence our fruits to be ſound and ſaving, lively and effectual; for as *Rachel* ſaid to *Jacob*, *give me Children or elſe I die*; in like manner ſaith Faith to the ſoul of a Chriſtian, *Give me Children*; let me bring forth good works, *elſe I die*, and have no life in me, according to that of the Apoſtle *James*, *Faith without works* Jam. 2. 26.

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is dead, its not a living but a dead faith, that manifeſts not its life by working.

II. As Meditation, ſo *Prayer* is a ſpecial means on our part to be performed, for attaining unto this grace of Charity. I ſay, earneſt and fervent prayer unto God for the ſame; for as he is the fountain and author of every good gift, ſo he hath ſanctified Prayer, as the means of obtaining every good gift from him.

Be earneſt therefore with God in Prayer, that he would be pleaſed to give thee a compaſſionate heart towards the needs and neceſſities of the poor members of Jeſus Chriſt; ſo an open hand, that thou mayeſt freely and liberally contribute unto them, according to their neceſſity, and thy ability: Beg of God that as he hath bleſſed thee with ſome competent eſtate, ſo he would add this mercy, to give thee an heart to give out proportionably to what he hath given thee; and that in teſtimony of thy love, and thankfulneſs unto him. But alas how few are there who in their prayers unto God are mindful of this grace of Charity? how few are there who ever begged of God, that he would be pleaſed to implant this noble grace of Charity in their hearts? If upon examination thou findeſt thy ſelf to have been faulty therein: Go take up a new reſolution to be earneſt with God in prayer for this grace eſpecially, and never to give over, till thou find it in ſome meaſure wrought in thy ſoul, till thou find thy ſelf upon all good occaſions ready to diſtribute, and willing to communicate to the needs and neceſſities of thy poor Brethren.

III. *Diligence in our Callings*, is another means on our part to be performed, for the practiſing of charity. He that would be charitable to the poor in their needs and neceſſities; muſt be diligent and induſtrious in his calling, ſo that he may have wherewithall to expreſs his charity; for mens diligence in their callings is uſually crowned with a bleſſing, according to that of the wiſe man, *the hand of the diligent maketh rich*: And again, *The ſoul of the diligent ſhall be made fat*, that is, ſhall be inriched with outward bleſſings: and the Greeks ſay, *that plentifulneſs follows painfulneſs*, and *that all things are made Servants to care and induſtry*? And therefore the Apoſtle *Paul* preſcribeth diligence and induſtry in a lawful calling as a means of charity; *Let him that ſtole, ſteal no more, but rather let him labour, working with his own hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needs*. This is one end we ſhould propound to our ſelves, in the works of our callings, namely, that through Gods bleſſing on our pains and endeavours, we may have, not only ſufficient for

Prov. 10. 4. Chap. 13. 4. Πόνω πλοῦτος ὀπηδεῖ τῆς ἐπιμελείας ὄλβος πάντα γίνεται. *Stob.* Eph. 4. 28.

for our own livelihood, & of them that belong unto us, but also so much what for the relief of others; *Solomon* describing the vertuous woman, saith in the first place, *that she seeks wool and flax, and works willingly with her hands*; And then, *that she stretches out her hands to the Poor, yea, she stretcheth forth her hands to the needy.* Prov. 31. 13.

IV. *Be careful to prevent all superfluities in your expences.* As diligence in your Callings, so frugality in your spending, is a special means for the practise of Charity; *Frugality*, saith *Justin*, *is the nurse of vertue*, I am sure it is the foundation and supporter of *Charity*; For let a mans estate be never so great, yet if there be not frugality used in the management thereof, there will be but little found for works of charity. And on the other side, though a mans estate be but mean and low in the world, yet if there be frugality used in the management of it, there will be ever somewhat for charitable uses. As therefore thou desirest to be charitable, be careful to prevent all unnecessary expences; I mean, let not thy apparel be too costly; for how can it be expected, that they should be charitable, ready to distribute to the necessities of others, who lay out the greatest part of their estates upon their backs. Neither let thy feastings be too frequent, nor too chargeable; which is noted for one of the sins of the old World, who *were given to eating*, as the word in the Original properly signifieth. Neither let thy Recreations be too expensive, in playing more for money than for refreshment: Oh that such of you who spend so much time and money on your Recreations; as if God had sent you into the world, and given you the good things of the world, for no other end than to follow your pleasures; would consider what a fearful reckoning you are to make at the day of Judgment, not only of your precious time lavishly misspent, but also of your estate wickedly lost, or wasted; when in thy account there shall be found so much wasted in gaming and pleasures, and so little given to the poor. *tam frugalitas, Just. l. 30.* τρυφὴν ἕξεις. Mat. 24. 38.

V. *Set apart something out of thine incomes and receipts, as a sacred stock for charitable uses.* For,

1. Hereby thou wilt be fitted and prepared with matter for such uses, having always somewhat by thee, to give upon any good occasion.

2. By this means thou wilt more readily and willingly, more freely and liberally contribute to the needs and necessities of others, having

Ad opes bonaque expetendos, ad cumulandas divitias, furioſa eſt noſtra libido, inſiat, cupiditas, Calv. Inſt. l. 3 c. 7.

ving a ſtock by thee for that very end and purpoſe. All men naturally are hard-hearted, and cloſe-handed, and thereupon are very hardly perſwaded to part with any thing conſiderable for charitable uſes. But this conſecrating before-hand a part of thine eſtate for the uſe of the poor, will cauſe thy charity to flow out more freely and bountifully.

Now a ſacred ſtock for the Poor may be raiſed two ways?

1. *By ſetting apart ſomething every Lords Day, out of thy comings in the week before, according as God hath proſpered thee*; which practice we find preſcribed unto us, by the direction of the Holy Ghoſt, and warranted unto us by the Apoſtolical authority; for ſaith the Apoſtle *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, *Now concerning the collection for the Saints, as I have given order to the Churches of* Galatia, *even ſo do ye. Upon the firſt day of the week* (which is the Lords Day) *let every one of you lay by him in ſtore, as God hath proſpered him*; that is, according to the ability wherewith God hath bleſſed him, let him ſet apart ſomething for the relief of the poor, eſpecially the poor Saints.

1 Cor. 16. 1, 2.

This rule I would commend to ſuch who live upon their daily labour. But for thoſe *Merchants*, *Citizens*, and *Trades-men*, who ſell much of their wares upon truſt, & know not certainly at the weeks end what they have gained; I would adviſe ſuch, when they have caſt up their accounts at the years end, to ſet apart ſomething of *their comings in that year, according as God hath proſpered them for charitable uſes*; as they expect Gods bleſſing upon their trading the year following.

2. *By conſecrating unto God a certain portion of thy yearly incomes and revenues for charitable uſes.* What this portion ſhould be I dare not determine, the Scriptures being ſilent therein, only in the general we are commanded *to give out proportionably to what God hath given unto us, that they who are rich in this worlds goods, be rich in good works*; But this I can ſay, that the moſt that I have heard or read of, who have taken this courſe to conſecrate unto God a certain portion of their eſtate to charitable uſes, have followed the example of *Jacob*, in giving a tenth part unto God. And as God did exceedingly bleſs *Jacob* after his vow, ſo likewiſe hath he bleſſed divers others after their vow unto God.

Gen. 28. 22.

* Mr. *Tho. Gataker*, in his Funeral Sermon at the Burial of Mr. *Jo. Parker*, Merchant and Citizen of *London*.

An eminent Divine of this City, now with God, in his Funeral Serwon, at the Burial of a Merchant, ſpeaking of his *Charity*, ſaith, that at his firſt effectual call, among other things he then reſolved upon, this

this was one, *to set a part every year a tenth of his gain for the relief of the poor*; and that God from that time forward abundantly advanced his estate.

Another eminent Divine in his Funeral Sermon at the Burial of the Lord *Harrington*, speaking of his *Charity*, declared, that in his life time he gave the tenth part of his yearly revenue to the poor. Mr. Stock.

And from mine own experience I can tell you of one yet living, who finding little coming in by his trade, resolved upon two things.

1. *To be more careful in Sanctifying the Lords Day.*

2. *To set apart the tenth of his increase for charitable uses.* Whereupon he gained so much in a few years, that he gave over his Calling, and ever since liveth upon his Rents.

Many like instances I could give you of some that are Dead, and others yet living, who have devoted, some a tenth, and others a fifth part of their whole estate to pious and charitable uses. Which I do not propound as a General Rule to all good Christians; for, some there are who have no more than is necessary for the comfortable support of themselves and family, from whom less is required for the relief of others. But I question whether such, whom the Lord hath blessed with a plentiful estate, so that their necessary expences are, or might be, far less than their incomes, can be accounted *rich in good works*, unless they give at least a *tenth part* of their whole yearly income to charitable uses. I say of their *whole* yearly income, *without first deducting* any part thereof for diet, cloaths, or other necessary expences; for the tenth of the remainder will be a very inconsiderable proportion for a rich man to devote to charity, and far short of that which the Scripture seems to call for. It is recorded of the *Jews*, that very many amongst the richer sort, who are devout in their Religion, do usually give away a tenth part of their estate to charitable uses. And is it not very unbeseeming *Christians*, who are rich in this worlds Goods, to fall short of the *Jews* herein?

Having thus done with the means on our part to be performed for attaining unto this Grace of Charity.

Come we now to the Motives, to quicken us up to a conscionable performance of the works of it. I shall touch only upon these Four,

1. The Excellency of the Duty.
2. The Piety which it containeth in it.
3. The Profit which ariſeth from it.
4. The Damage which follows upon the neglect thereof.

I. The firſt Motive or Inducement to Charity may be taken from *the excellency thereof.* I ſuppoſe that all will grant that the greateſt excellency that a creature can attain unto, is to be like his Creator. That excellency wherein man was at firſt created, is thus ſet out, *God created man in his own Image*; that is, *in his own likeneſs*. And that excellency wherewith we ſhall be Glorified in Heaven, is ſet out by our likeneſs to Chriſt; for it is ſaid, *Our bodies ſhall then be faſhioned like unto his glorious body*, yea, in the whole man, *when he ſhall appear, then we ſhall be like him.*

Gen 1.26,27.
Phil. 3.21.
1 Joh 3.2.

Now while we live on earth, there is nothing wherein we can ſhew our ſelves more like unto God, than in ſhewing mercy, and in ſuccouring ſuch as ſtand in need. When God ſets himſelf to proclaim his Name, he moſt inſiſteth upon his *mercifulneſs and goodneſs*. Chriſt himſelf doth preſs this Motive to enforce this Duty, thus, [*Be ye merciful, as your Father is merciful.*] The excellency of Charity doth herein further appear, that Chriſt hath ſet the poor in his own room; inſomuch as they who relieve the poor, do therein relieve Chriſt himſelf. So much doth Chriſt acknowledge, where he ſaith to ſuch as ſuccoured the poor, *Inaſmuch as you have done it to one of the leaſt of theſe my Brethen, ye have done it unto me*: Is it not an excellent thing to relieve Chriſt? They then that relieve the poor, do an excellent work. As it is a great aggravation of perſecuting the true profeſſors of the Faith, becauſe therein they perſecute Chriſt himſelf, as is implyed under this Divine voice that affrighted *Saul*, while he was breathing out threatnings and ſlaughter againſt the Diſciples of the Lord, *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou me?* So it is a great commendation of true Charity, that Chriſt himſelf is relieved thereby.

Exod 34.6.
Luk 6.36.
Mat. 25.40.
Acts 9.1,4.

II. Another Motive is the *Piety*, which in and by performing this duty of Alms-giving is manifeſted. Piety, I ſay to God. For *pure Religion and undefiled before God, is this, to viſit the Fatherleſs, and Widows in their affliction.* Here he puts two particulars, for all kinds of Charity: And by this phraſe, *Pure Religion before God is this*, he intends four things.

Jam. 1 27.

1. That

1. That it is but a meer shew of Religion that is without charity.
2. That true Religion will make men charitable.
3. That Charity will prove men to be truly Religious.
4. That works of Charity are as acceptable to God, as Duties of Religion For God accounts Charity *an odour of a sweet smell, a Sacrifice acceptable, and well-pleasing unto him.* The poor and needy are to God as the Altars of burnt-offerings, and incense were under the Law. Those things which were laid on them, and offered up, were given to the Lord, and as a gift accepted by him. Even so are Alms given to the poor, the poor are the Altar, Alms the Sacrifice. Now who would not dispose of that which he hath, as God may account it given to him, and answerably accept it? On this very ground doth the Apostle incite the *Hebrews* to this duty, in this manner, *To do good, and to communicate forget not; for with such Sacrifices God is well pleased.* Thus we see how works of Charity are not only useful and profitable to man, but also acceptable and well-pleasing to God, which consideration addeth much life to the Duty here pressed. Phil. 4. 18. Heb. 13. 16.

III. A third Motive is, *the manifold profit wherewith it is rewarded.* Profit and advantage is the Motive, which, for the most part, spurs men on to labour and take pains, to rise early, and sit up late, to venture goods, life, and all they have. Witness the pains, travels, and watchings and adventures of Labourers, Work-men, Trades-men, Farmers, Merchants, Mariners, &c. yet that profit which they aim at, is but earthly and temporary, and their hope of attaining it uncertain. Surely works of Charity give an assured hope of a far greater, and better profit than earth can afford. *Omnes experimus utilitatem, ad eamque rapimur nec facere aliter ullo modo possumus*, Cic. Offic. 3.

In general it is promised, *That if we cast our bread upon the waters, we shall find it after many days*; that is, if we give Alms to the poor, where all we do may seem to be cast away, as if it were thrown into the Sea; yet in due time will it return to us with advantage. And lest any should be discouraged from doing works of Charity, our Saviour assureth us, *That whosoever giveth but a cup of cold water* (which is one of the least acts of Charity we can perform) *shall in no wise lose his reward.* *Facundus est ager pauperum citò reddit donantibus fructum*, Aug. Serm. de Divite. Mat. 10. 42.

If in special it be demanded what profit is there of Charity? I answer, (as the Apostle did of Circumcision) *much every way.* Yea, I may Rom. 3. 1.

1 Tim. 4. 8. may say of *Charity*, as the Apostle doth of *Piety*, *It is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.*

In this life is promised.

Prov. 28. 27. 1. Sufficiency, *He that giveth to the poor shall not lack*; that is, he shall be secured from want and penury; God will not suffer him to be brought to penury, who hath been charitable to the poor.

2. Not only sufficiency, but likewise *abundance*; For saith the Wiseman, Prov. 3. 9, 10. *Honour the Lord with thy Substance*, by giving freely and chearfully to charitable and pious uses; *So shall thy Barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new-Wine*, which is an hyperbolical expression, implying plenty and abundance.

Deut. 15. 10. 3. *Good success in what he enterprizeth.* According to that of *Moses*, *Thou shalt surely give him, because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto.*

Psal. 41. 1. 4. *Deliverance out of trouble.* For saith the Psalmist, *Blessed is he that considereth the poor; the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.*

Vers. 2. 5. *Protection against enemies*; As it followth in the next verse, *Thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.*

Vers. 3. 6. *Succour in sickness*; as the Prophet goes on, *The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing*, that is, the Lord will comfort and support him in his sickness, and at length restore his strength again. *Thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness*; that is, thou wilt give him ease and rest, as they do to sick men that make their beds.

7. To pass by other particulars, *Blessedness*, which comprizeth under it all manner of Commodities, is promised to the Charitable person, *Prov.* 22. 9. And in *Psal.* 41. 2. It is said, *He shall be blessed upon the earth*; yea, *and at the resurrection of the just*, Luke 14. 14.

Psal. 37. 26. 8. This promise is extended to his posterity; *for his seed shall be blessed.*

These and other like promises of temporal, spiritual, and eternal blessings, being made by the Lord God of Truth, may with much confidence be rested upon. For Gods Words are Deeds, his Promises Performances.

Mat. 25. 34. In the life to come, merciful men shall *inherit the Kingdom prepared for them, from the foundation of the world.*

There

There are, among others, two Metaphors often used by the Holy Ghost, in setting out Alms-giving, which do much amplifie the commodity thence arising.

One is taken from *lending*; the other from *sowing*.

1. Alms-giving is set forth in Scripture by *lending*; yea, to such a lending, whereby we have not only the principal restored, but with great encrease. And whereas such as put forth their money unto men, can expect but six in the hundred; If we in obedience to the command of God, shall freely part with our money to the use of the poor, for their relief, we shall receive an hundred for six, yea, an hundred for one, and eternal life to boot. And we need not to doubt of the payment; Mar. 10. 30. for though the poor be never so unable, yet we have an all-sufficient *Surety*, even God himself, who hath undertaken to pay whatsoever is thus put forth, according to that of the Wise-man, *He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given, will be pay him again.* Where you have Gods counterbond to save you harmless, in which he both acknowledgeth the debt, and promiseth payment. And what better security can any man desire than a bond under Gods own hand? The consideration whereof should me thinks make us willing to embrace any opportunity of putting out our money to this great advantage. Prov. 19. 17.

2. As for the other Metaphor of *sowing*, it is in Scripture applyed to Alms-giving, under this phrase, *He hath dispersed.* As the Husbandman disperseth his seed which he soweth in the earth; so doth the Alms-giver his Alms, therefore this is added by way of exposition, *He hath given to the poor.* The Apostle also applieth unto Alms-giving this proverbial speech, *He which soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully, shall reap bountifully.* Now what is it that ordinarily bringeth forth a greater increase than sowing seed in fertile Ground? It is said of *Isaac*, that he *sowed in the Land, and received in the same year an hundred-fold.* And Christ saith, that *good ground beareth fruit, some an hundred-fold, some sixty-fold, some thirty-fold.* Now Alms-giving is one of those things that shall receive an hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life. Psal. 112. 9. 2 Cor. 9. 6. Gen. 26 12. Mat. 13. 8.

If therefore profit and advantage may be a Motive to stir us up unto any thing, surely it should be a motive to incite us unto liberality in

in Alms-giving, to be bountiful in contributing to the relief of the poor.

For it is a most certain truth, that *giving to the poor, is the surest and safest way of getting.* For though Husband-men may sometimes lose the benefit of their seed sown, through mill-dews, or unseasonable weather; and such as put their money to use may come short of their principal: yet he who with an honest, and sincere heart giveth to the poor, shall in no wise lose his reward. For as the Wise-man speaketh, *There is that scattereth, and yet encreaseth,* Prov. 11. 24. intimating unto us, that this scattering is the best way of encreasing. And indeed so it is; for hath not our Saviour promised, *That if we give, it shall be given unto us, good measure pressed down, and shaken together?* Here God gives us as it were a bill of his hand, and enters into bond, and becomes Surety with the poor, that what we give shall be repayed with advantage. This is a *Paradox* to worldly men, that *giving should be the surest and safest way of getting and encreasing,* yet nothing more clearly laid down in the Scripture, and found to be true by the experience of Gods People.

Luke 6. 35.

4. The fourth Motive and Inducement is *the damage which may ensue upon the neglect of Alms-giving.* Though it argue a kind of servile disposition to be moved with fear of loss or gain, to a duty; yet of that disposition are many; and in that respect this may be added as an Inducement to the Duty.

The damage that may arise upon the neglect of Charity, when it ought to be shewed, is in the kind thereof as large, as the fore-mentioned benefits of performing the duty, in the kind of it.

For neglect of the Duty doth not only cause a forfeiture of all the fore-mentioned benefits arising from the performance thereof, but also pulleth upon the neglecters head, many evils. Where the Wise-man saith, *The merciful man, doth good to his own soul;* he addeth, *but he that is cruel, troubleth his own flesh.* *Soul* and *Flesh* are the two essential parts of a man; both the one and the other are Synechdochically put for the whole man; even for the person. By a cruel man, is meant an unmerciful, or hard-hearted man; for he is opposed to a merciful man. The meaning then of this Proverb is this; As a merciful man doth good, not only to his poor brother, to whom he sheweth mercy, but also to himself: So an hard-hearted man doth not only grieve his distressed neighbour in affording him no succour, but also brings much damage to himself. *For he that withholdeth more than is meet, cometh to poverty.*

Prov. 11. 17.

Vers. 24.

With-

With-holding is there opposed to scattering, which word hath reference to casting or sowing seed on the earth to bring forth a crop; and thereby is meant Alms-giving. On the contrary, *With-holding more than is meet*, implies a denial of Alms, when there is just cause to give. Justice and equity require this Duty (as we have before shewed) so as that phrase doth much aggravate this kind of unmercifulness: and as a just punishment thereof, that which covetous men by refusing to give, seek to prevent, shall fall upon them, even *poverty*.

And if in any distress they shall be forced to seek help of others, even they shall be neglected as they neglected others. The Wiseman testifieth as much in these words, *Who so stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, and not be heard.* Not only other men, but also God himself will refuse to hear his cry. *Dives*, who refused to relieve *Lazarus*, could not obtain any to afford him a drop of water to cool his tongue, when he was tormented in Hell flames. It is expressly said, that *he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy*, *James* 2. 13. For God deals with men according to their dealing with others. Prov. 21. 13. Luk. 16. 24. Mat. 18. 33.

Finally, as blessings are promised to merciful men, so curses are denounced against unmerciful men. As under blessings, all manner of good things are comprized, so under curses, all manner of evils. Unmerciful men shall have the curses of men, and *people shall curse them.* And at the great Day of Judgment, they shall be pronounced cursed by the Great Judge. *For then shall he say unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels: For I was an hungred and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink*, &c. Prov. 28. 27. Prov. 11. 26. Mat. 25. 41, 42, &c.

Having thus done with the *Motives*, I shall close this Discourse with answering some *Objections*, which keep back many from a conscionable discharge of this Duty.

Object. 1. Some object their great charge, having a wife and many children to provide for; and are ready to say with the Apostle, That *Parents ought to lay up for their Children. And if any provide not for his own, especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an Infidel*; How then can we be liberal to the poor? 2 Cor. 12. 14. 1 Tim. 5. 8.

Answ. 1. I deny not but Parents ought to provide for their Children,

so far as they may with a good conscience. But know, that the same Apostle who commands you to *lay up* for your Children, doth likewise command you to *lay out* a considerable part of your estate for the succour and relief of others. As *Gal.* 6. 10. *As we have opportunity let us do good unto all, especially unto them who are of the houshold of faith.* And *Heb.* 13. 16. *But to do good, and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.* If therefore you would approve your selves sincere Christians, you must bear an equal and impartial respect to all and every the commands of the Lord, making conscience of one Duty as well as of another.

2. The greater thy love, the stronger thine affections are to thy Children, the more liberal and bountiful shouldst thou be to the poor Saints and Servants of Jesus Christ, that thereby thou mayest entail Gods blessing upon the persons and estate of thy Children. I am sure thou wilt grant that without Gods blessing, all thou shalt bequeath unto thy children will little avail them; and what better course canst thou take to procure Gods blessing upon that part of thy estate which thou shalt leave them, than freely to communicate some part thereof to pious and charitable uses? For as the Psalmist expresseth it, *The seed of the merciful shall be blessed.* Whereby is implied, that thy mercy and liberality to the poor, will entail Gods blessing upon thy children.

Psal. 37. 26.

Very solicitous many are to entail their Lands and Houses on their Posterity, that they may continue in the same family: But I know no surer way, than in their life time, to communicate a considerable part of their estate to the poor. And thus by taking somewhat from your Childrens Portion for the relief of the poor, you may exceedingly advance their estate. Hath God blessed thee with Children? in Christian discretion then thou shouldst be charitable, that thereby thou mayest procure Gods blessing, both on thy self and posterity. For thy sparing and with-holding from the poor, to make thy Children rich, may prove the subversion and ruine of thine house and children.

Forsan haredi præstabis quicquid misericordiæ causa de ejus portione detraxeris, Aug. de tempore Serm. 76.

3. Though thou oughtest to lay up some competent portions for thy children, yet ought not that to be a pretence against laying out a portion of thine estate here on the poor. For know that the poor have a right unto part of thine estate, as well as thy children, though not unto so great a part. In which respect the spirit of God calleth that part of the rich mans stock which he can well spare, *the poor mans due*, unto whom

whom of right it doth belong; for saith he, *Prov.3.27. With-hold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thy hand to do it.* Whereupon said an ancient Father, *It is the bread of the hungry which moulders in thy Cupboard; It's the garment of the naked which hangs useless in thy Chamber: It's the gold of the poor which lieth rusting in thy Chest.* So that thy relieving the poor, is not only an act of mercy, left to thy choice to do, or not to do; but also of justice, to the performance whereof thou standest bound. And therefore what St. *Paul* saith of himself concerning the preaching of the Gospel; *Necessity is laid upon me, yea, who is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel* The like should all Rich men especially say of themselves, *necessity is laid upon us, to give out a part of our estate for the relief of the poor Saints and Servants of Jesus Christ, and woe be unto us, if we do it not.*

Est panis famelici quem tu tenes, nudi tunica quam tu in conclavi conservas, &c. Basil. 1 Cor. 9. 16.

4. It is a great mistake in Parents, that because it is their Duty to make some provision for their children, therefore they are bound to lay up all that possibly they can scrape together for their use, without giving any considerable part towards the relief of the poor; for thereby they manifestly declare, that they prefer their childrens temporal good, before their own spiritual and eternal good, and hazard the salvation of their own souls, for the advancement of their childrens estate. Oh how little comfort will it be to you in Hell-torments, to think that you have lost heavenly joys, for the gaining of some earthly enjoyments for your Children? If therefore you have little or no charity for others, yet have some for your own souls by a liberal contribution to the poor Saints and Servants of Jesus Christ, and that according to your own ability, and their necessity.

Object. 2. Some object their poor and mean estate, pretending they have not wherewithal to supply the wants, and relieve the necessities of others.

Answ. 1. Though thou pleadest poverty to excuse thy not giving towards the supply of the needy and necessitous, yet it is to be feared, that thy plea is not real but feigned, a meer pretence, because thou canst find money enough to buy rich and costly apparel for thy self, wife and children; money enough to pamper thy belly, and to feast thy rich neighbours, friends, and acquaintance; money enough for the gratifying thy sinful lusts and pleasures; when thou canst find little or nothing for the cloathing the naked backs of the poor members of Jesus Christ, nothing for the filling of their empty bellies, nothing;

thing for their comfort and support. Oh how sad will thy reckoning be at the great day of judgment, when thou shalt hear, so much spent in cloaths, so much in costly diet, so much in satisfying thy carnal lusts and pleasures, and so little in relieving the poor Saints and Servants of Jesus Christ.

2. Though thy plea be real, that thou art in truth in a low and mean estate, yet oughtest thou to give something, when thou meetest with those who are poorer than thy self, especially if they be in great necessity, *Eph.*4 28. The Apostle exhorteth poor men, even such as work for their living; so to labour, that they may have not only to maintain themselves and family, but also to relieve the necessities of others: *Let him labour*, saith the Apostle, *working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.* The deep poverty of the *Macedonians*, we read, kept them not from contributing to the poor Saints at *Jerusalem*, who were poorer than themselves.

2 Cor. 8. 2, 3.

Who could plead greater poverty than the poor *Widow* in the Gospel, who having but two Mites, cast them both into the Treasury? of whom our Saviour giveth this testimony, *That she cast more into the treasury then the rich; for all they did cast in of their abundance, but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.* An half-penny or farthing of that little which a poor man giveth, is more in Christs reckoning, than a whole mass of money out of a rich mans treasure. Say not therefore I am poor, and have but little, thinking thereby to excuse thy not giving; for thou canst not be poorer than that poor *Widow*; but of a little give a little, and it will be accepted; *for if there be a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.* God looketh not so much to the greatness of the gift, as to the quantity of the store out of which it is given, and the largeness of the affections wherewith it is given.

Mar. 12. 43.

2 Cor. 8. 12.

Object. Some are ready to object and say, they live in dangerous times, and know not what troubles may befall them, and therefore it will be wisdom to keep what they have.

Answ. 1. The more dangerous the times are, the more reason thou hast to give out of thy store towards the relief of others; For

1. Thou knowest not how long thou mayest enjoy thy life or estate, *whatsoever therefore thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might*; that is, whatsoever ability or opportunity thou hast of doing good, do it, as with

Eccl. 9. 10.

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with all diligence, so speedily. And saith the Wise-man, *Give a portion to seven, and also to eight*; as if he had said, let thy liberality be large and bountiful, not limiting it to few, but distributing to many, mark his reason in the next words; *for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth*; *i. e.* what troublesome times may be. I have read of an Husbandman, who hearing of the approach of an Army, and fearing thereby the loss of all his corn, caused as much as possibly he could to be carried into the City, and committed the custody thereof to a friend of his. In like manner let the apprehensions of dangerous times prevail with thee, to deliver some considerable part of thy estate unto the poor members of Christ, whereby it will be best preserved from loss and spoils. Chap. 11. 2.

2. Thy liberality to the poor, will be a notable means to free thine heart from those anxious and distrustful fears of evil times, which do usually possess the hearts of unmerciful men, as the Psalmist seemeth to imply, *Psalm* 112. 7, 9. *He shall not be afraid of evil tidings, his heart is fixed trusting in the Lord.* The reason whereof he rendreth, *verse* 9. *He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor*; therefore he shall not be afraid of evil tydings. And indeed such have least ground of fear; For

1. God hath promised to deliver such from the evil to come, as *Psal.* 41. 1. *Blessed is he that considereth the poor, the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.*

2. God hath promised, that though they should fall into troublesome times, yet they shall find abundance of sweet peace and comfort in their own souls; for saith the Lord, *If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfie the afflicted soul*, *i. e.* If thou shalt afford unto him that which may supply his necessity, and satisfie his hunger, *then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon day.* Where *light* signifieth peace and comfort, as darkness signifieth affliction. So that the Prophets meaning is, that merciful men shall have peace and comfort, in the most troublesome and uncomfortable times, which if it were seriously considered, would be a great encouragement to us, to abound in works of mercy. Isa. 58. 10.

Object. 4. Some object and say, If I be so full in giving, I may want my self before I dye.

Answ. 1. Doth the Husbandman forbear to sow his seed for fear

fear of want? Nay, rather doth he not with a plentiful hand sow his seed, that he may prevent want; being confident that by sowing his seed, he shall in due time reap it again with such encrease, that thereby he shall be inabled to sustain himself and family. So that this Objection is a groundless fear, arising from a distrustful heart, contrary to that of the Wise-man, *Prov.* 28. 27. *He that giveth to the poor shall not lack*, viz. any thing which God seeth to be good and needful for him. Nay, by not giving, thou art likeliest to come to want; for saith the spirit of God, *There is that with-holdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.* So that keeping back and hoarding up, is the readiest way to want and penury, whereas giving to the poor, according to that God hath given unto us, is the best means to prevent penury.

Prov. 11. 24.

2. Thou needst not fear want by giving; for thereby thou wilt both secure thy stock, and increase thy store.

1. What thou givest to the poor, with an honest and sincere heart, will secure the rest of thy estate. For as in a state Politick, the Leiger-Ambassadours that are sent abroad to lie in forraign Kingdoms, secure our peaceable state at home. In like manner, that which thou dispersest and sendest abroad to the poor, doth secure the rest at home. *So that in truth our earthly goods are lost by keeping, and kept by giving away.*

Terenn: servando amittimus, largiendo servamus, Isiodor.

2. That which thou givest away to the poor will increase thy store. For *Give*, saith our Saviour, *and it shall be given unto you, good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over.* By which variety of expressions, our Saviour declareth, that charitable men shall not only receive back again from God, what they give to the poor, but abundantly more; which the Wise-man implieth, where he saith, *There is that scattereth, and yet encreaseth*; intimating that the more we scatter the seeds of our beneficence, the greater our increase will be. And as it followeth in the next verse, *The liberal soul shall be made fat*; *i. e.* he that is bountiful towards others, shall be enriched himself. *And he that watereth*, viz. others with his store, *shall be watered also himself*; *i. e.* shall be abundantly watered with the blessing of God, that he may have wherewith to do more good. Whereupon saith the Apostle *Paul*, *He that soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly, but he that soweth bountifully, shall reap bountifully*: Thereby hinting unto us, the great gain and encrease that we shall receive by a free and liberal contribution,

Luk. 6. 38.

Prov. 11. 24.

2. Cor. 9. 6.

tribution, to the poor Saints and Servants of Jesus Christ, which *Job* acknowledged when he said (Chap. 29. 13.) *the blessing of him that was ready to perish, came upon me, i. e.* I had their prayers, and the Lord blessed me extraordinarily for relieving them.

Some question there is about the lawfulness of putting out money to use. But this is out of question, that to put out a considerable part of thine estate to charitable uses, is, as a lawful, so the most gainful usury in the world; for thereby thou shalt receive, instead of six in the hundred, an hundred for six. If therefore thou wilt be wisely covetous, fall upon the practice of this Christian Usury, knowing that the more thou shalt adventure therein, the greater will be thy gain, and the more bountifully thou shalt receive.

Eleemosyna non est divitiarum dispendium, sed ditescendi potius compendium, quæstusq; omnium uberimus.

Object. 5. Some object that what they give unto the poor, is utterly lost.

Answ. 1. This is directly contrary to what the Spirit of God saith, *Prov.* 19. 17. *He that hath pitty on the poor, lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given, will he repay him again.* If that which thou givest to the poor be repaid thee again, how can it be said to be lost? indeed the poor unto whom thou givest, are unable to repay thee, yet having such an all-sufficient surety as God himself, who hath undertaken the repayment, thou needst not doubt thereof.

2. It is a great mistake in men, to think that what they give away to charitable uses, is utterly lost: For in truth a covetous scraping, and sordid hoarding up our wealth, is the only way of losing it. But as I have formerly shewed, a chearful distributing part thereof to the poor, is the surest way of securing our stock, and encreasing our store. I never yet met with the man, who could say that he was a loser in his estate by what he gave away to charitable uses. And this I can affirm, that very many have, and are still ready to acknowledge, that as the Widows oyl encreased by pouring out; so that their store hath multiplied and encreased by giving away to good uses.

3. What thou givest to the poor is not lost, but sent to Heaven before thee. It is reported of *Cyrus*, that he should say, that *by doing good he hoarded up riches for himself.* But sure I am, that by communicating part of thy goods to the poor Saints and Servants of God, *thou layest up treasure for thy self in Heaven.* Mat 6. 20.

This is the very argument, wherewith the Apostle in the words of the

the Text, enforceth this Duty of liberality to the poor; for ſaith he, *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate*: Mark his reaſon in the next words, *laying up in ſtore for themſelves, a good foundation againſt the time to come*; Where the Apoſtle intimateth, that by laying out on the poor, we do in truth lay up in ſtore for our ſelves. Look therefore how much thou layeſt out here on good uſes, by a Bill of Exchange, as it were, thou ſhalt receive as much, yea, much more in the Kingdom of Heaven; To which agreeth that of St. *Auſtine, Whatſoever we give to the poor, we ſend before us, and we ſhall find that in Heaven, which we give here on Earth.*

Quod pauperi datum ante nos præmittimus, Aug.

I have met with a notable Story to this purpoſe, which I ſhall the rather relate, becauſe I have known ſome ſo affected upon the hearing thereof, as that they have taken up preſent reſolutions, to communicate more liberally to the neceſſities of the poor, than ever they did in their lives before. The ſtory is this,

Syneſius *a good Biſhop of* Cyrene, *labored much, and a long time with one* Evagrius *an Heathen Philoſopher, to convert him to the Chriſtian Faith, but all in vain; The Philoſopher ſtill objecting that the Chriſtian Religion taught many ſtrange and improbable things; among others,* That he that hath pity on the poor, lendeth to the Lord; *and* he that giveth to the poor and needy, ſhall have treaſure in Heaven, and ſhall receive an hundred-fold from Chriſt, together with eternal life: *Things, ſaid he, to be derided rather than believed. The good Biſhop notwithſtanding ceaſed not to travel with him, aſſuring him by many arguments, that theſe things were true, and at laſt prevailed, ſo that the Philoſopher and all his Children were baptized. A while after he cometh to* Syneſius, *and bringeth with him three hundred pounds of Gold for the poor, bids him take it, but would have a Bill under his hand, that Chriſt ſhould repay it him in another world.* Syneſius *took the money for the poor, and gave him ſuch a Bill under his hand as he deſired. Afterwards the Philoſopher being near his death, commanded his Sons, that when they buried him, they ſhould put* Syneſius *Bill into his hand in the grave, which they did. The third day after he was buried, the Philoſopher ſeemed to appear to* Syneſius *in the night, and ſaid to him,* [Come to my Sepulchre where I lye, and take thy Bill; for I have received the Debt, and am ſatisfied; which for thy aſſurance, I have ſubſcribed it with mine own hand.] *The Biſhop not well knowing the meaning hereof, ſent to his Sons, who told him all, whereupon taking*

taking them and the chief men of the City with him, he went to the grave, and found the paper in the hand of the Corps, thus subscribed, [Ego Evagrius Philosophus, tibi Sanctissimo Domino *Synesio* Episcopo, salutem: Accepi debitum in his literis manu tua conscriptum, satisfactumque mihi est; & nullum contra te habeo jus propter aurum quod dedi tibi, & per te Christo Deo & Salvatori nostro.] *That is, I* Evagrius *the Philosopher, to the most Holy Sir, Bishop* Synesius, *greeting: I have received the debt which in this paper is written with thy hand, and I am satisfied, and I have no action against thee; for the Gold which I gave thee, and by thee to Christ, our God and Saviour.*

This Story, I say, I was willing to relate at large, not only because it passeth in antiquity for a great (though strange) truth, but also because as I said, I have known it reported to some, with such good effect and success, as I hope and heartily wish it may have upon thy Spirit.

4. Thy works of Charity to the poor Saints and Servants of Jesus Christ, will hereafter be rewarded with everlasting glory and happiness in Heaven. So much our Saviour expresseth by declaring, that the *Kingdom of Heaven was from the foundation of the world, prepared for the merciful*; who had shewed themselves bountiful to the poor members of Jesus Christ, by cloathing the naked, feeding the hungry, *&c.* Mat. 25. 34, 35. And saith our Saviour, *Mat.* 10. 41. *He that receiveth a Prophet in the name of a Prophet shall receive a Prophets reward; and he that receiveth a Righteous man in the name of a Righteous man, shall receive a Righteous mans reward. As by receiving a Righteous man, in the name of a Righteous man,* is to shew kindness to him for his Righteousness sake; so *by receiving a Prophet in the name of a Prophet,* is not only a receiving of his Message and Ministry, but also a receiving of his person, by shewing kindness unto him, either in entertaining of him, or contributing to his needs and necessities, and that as he is a Minister of the Gospel. And by the Prophets and Righteous mans *reward*, which such shall receive as relieve them, is meant, that surpassing and excellent weight of glory in Heaven, which cannot be expressed by the tongue of men or Angels. Not that their works of charity do merit that Glorious reward, but in regard of the promise of God made to all those, who in faith apply themselves to the practise of good works.

Object. 6. Many there are who make a great profession of Religion, but manifest little power thereof in their lives, being as

backward to any good work, and as barren therein as any whoſoever.

Anſw. I muſt confeſs there is more truth in this objection, than in any I have yet met withall. For I cannot but acknowledge, there are too many whoſe leaves of profeſſion are very broad, but their fruits of charity and liberality are very ſmall; who are a ſhame to Religion, a reproach to Chriſtianity, and a ſcandal to profeſſion.

But this may be taken for an anſwer, That whereas many who make a profeſſion of Religion, are barren in good works: queſtionleſs they are no ſincere Chriſtians, no true Converts, but meer outſide Profeſſours. For moſt certain it is, that *the elect of God put on bowels of mercy*, as the Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaketh. Therefore whoſoever he be that having this worlds good doth make a profeſſion of Religion, and yet ſhutteth up his bowels of compaſſion from his poor brother, and will not communicate towards his neceſſities, let his profeſſion be never ſo ſpecious and glorious in the eyes of men, yet certainly he is but a rotten profeſſour, and diſſembling hypocrite in the ſight of God; for ſaith the Apoſtle St. *James*, *Pure religion, and undefiled before God, and the Father, is this, to viſit the Fatherleſs and Widows in their affliction*: Implying, that works of charity are clear evidences of the truth of our Religion, and of the ſincerity of our profeſſion. If you look into the Scripture, you ſhall ſcarce read of a man truly Godly, but he was charitable; nay, according to his eminence in Godlineſs, he was eminent in works of charity, to inſtance in ſome few.

Col 3. 12.

Jam. 1. 27.

Abraham, the Father of the faithful, as he was eminent in Godlineſs, ſo was he eminent in Hoſpitality, which is one of the nobleſt works of Charity: For we read, how *Abraham ſtood at his Tent-door, and no ſooner ſaw ſtrangers paſſing by, but called them in, and gave them entertainment.*

Gen. 18. 1, 2.

As there was none like *Job* in his days for Piety and Godlineſs, of whom God himſelf giveth this teſtimony, *That there was none like* Job *in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feared God and eſchewed evil*: So neither was there any like *Job* for liberality. Note what he ſaith of himſelf, *The bleſſing of him that was ready to periſh, came upon me*; *i. e.* I had many good prayers, and well-wiſhes from them, whom I had relieved in their low and periſhing condition, *and I cauſed the Widows heart to ſing for joy*; *i. e.* by my bounty and liberality to her in her neceſſity, I gave her great cauſe of hearty joy. And afterwards *Job* declareth, how *he had not*, according to the manner of covetous & churliſh

Job 1. 8.

Chap. 29. 13.

lish persons, *eaten his meat alone, without giving part thereof to the hungry Orphans. Neither had he seen any perish for want of cloathing:* Under which expressions are implied, his readiness to feed the hungry, and cloath the naked, with other like acts of charity. Chap 31.17. Ver. 19.

It is recorded to the perpetual praise and commendation of good *Obadiah*, that in the time of famine and persecution, he not only hid the Prophets of God by fifty in a Cave, from the cruelty of *Jezabel*, but that also in that extream dearth, there sustained them with food, and supplied their necessities. 1 King 18.4.

We read of *Cornelius*, who as he was a godly and devout man, so he was very charitable, for the Spirit of God giveth this testimony of him, *That he was a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, who gave much alms to the poor*; He was not only charitable, but did abound in works of charity, *giving much alms to the poor*. Acts 10.4.

We likewise read of *Gaius*, who is recorded to be a Godly, Wealthy Citizen of *Corinth*, that he did usually in his house entertain, not only the Apostle *Paul*, but also all Christians resorting to that City. Rom. 16.23.

The Apostle *Paul*, who was an holy, zealous Christian, was likewise charitable; for in his Epistle to *Timothy*, reckoning up some of his graces, as his faith, patience, long-suffering, *&c.* he mentions *Charity*. 2 Tim. 3.10.

Yea, we read of *Zacheus*, that though before his conversion, he was a most covetous extortioner, yet after his conversion, he gave the half of his Goods to the poor; for said he, *Behold Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor*. Luke 19. 8.

But the most remarkable, is the Charity of the Primitive Christians, who being converted by the Ministry of the Apostles, and having embraced the Christian Faith, it is said, that *as many of them as were possessors of lands, or houses, sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, & laid them down at the Apostles feet, and distribution was made unto every man, according to his need.* Thus you see it hath ever been the property of a sincere Christian, and true believer, to be charitable. And certainly whosoever by a true and lively faith, are ingrafted into Jesus Christ, cannot but be fruitful branches bringing forth the fruits of mercy and compassion, of charity and liberality towards their poor brethren. Act. 4. 34, 35.

I shall conclude therefore with a passage of a reverend Divine now with God. Mr. *Rob. Bolton* in his Directions for a comfortable walking with God, *p.* 262.

If the world hath locked up thine heart, and congealed the bowels of thy compassion towards the poor; let the blaze of thine outward profession shine never

never ſo fair; manage the heartleſs repreſentation of external holineſs never ſo demurely; keep the times and tasks of daily duties, with never ſo great auſterity; nay, though thou be able to amaze weaker Chriſtians with ſome affected ſtrains, and artificial fervency in Prayer; for all this, if the holy heat of brotherly love doth not warm thine heart, and upon occaſion work affectionately and effectually; I dare ſay, thou art rotten at the heart-root, there is no true love of God in thee, no grace, no hope of ſalvation.

Let that terrible and flaming place againſt all covetous Phariſees, 1 *Joh.* 3.14. *Who ſo hath this worlds goods, and ſeeth his brother hath need, and ſhutteth up his bowels of compaſſion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? Let it, I ſay, diſſolve thy frozen-heartedneſs this way, and enlarge the bowels of pity towards thy poor brethren of Chriſt Jeſus, or elſe never look hereafter to look him in the face with comfort, or to find mercy at that day.*

If

If we muſt aim at Aſſurance, what ſhould they do, that are not able to diſcern their own ſpiritual condition?

1 Joh. 5. 13.

Theſe things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have Eternal Life.

THE greatneſs of the mercy, in having of the Scripture is manifeſted by the great advantages that the Elect of God receive thereby: *viz.* (*a*) that they might be brought to cloſe with Chriſt by faith unfeigned, and be partakers of eternal life through him, that bad men might be made good, and that good men might be made ſure of an eternal bleſſed ſtate, in the life to come, whereby the Lord hath abundantly provided both for our happineſs and our comfort: for our happineſs, that we may have eternal life: (*b*) for our comfort: that we may know we have eternal life. I cannot ſtay to view the context. I need not ſtay to explain the Text. The caſe of conſcience to be treated of from this Scripture is this.

a Joh. 20. 31.

b 1 Joh. 1. 4. Rom. 15. 4.

Since men may know that they have eternal life, what muſt they do that cannot diſcern their ſpiritual Condition?

Here are two things to be performed,

Firſt, That we may know in this life, that we ſhall *certainly* be partakers of eternal glory in the life to come. For if aſſurance be not poſſible, I can neither blame you for wanting it, nor ſtir you up to labour after it.

Secondly, Lay down ſome Rules for the getting of it, and directions,

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directions, if by these rules we cannot for the present obtain it.

For the stating of the first part of the Question, concerning the possibility of getting this certain knowledge of our future Happiness, I shall lay before you these six positions.

1. *Position.*

c John 3.36. 1 Joh.5.10,12. 1. An unregenerate person while (*c*) such can have no assurance, or certain knowlege of the eternal salvation of his Immortal soul. Because *as such* he hath no actual interest in the promises of salvation, being without the conditions of faith and repentance, to which the promises are made, being a child of (*d*) wrath, (*e*) a slave to his lusts, a (*f*) captive to the Devil a (*g*) rejecter of the Son of God. This man hath *plague sores, tokens* of eternal death. I cannot say thou shalt be infallibly damned, because thou (*h*) mayest repent and believe; and thou canst not say thou shalt be saved, because thou hast not yet repented for thy sin, nor believed on the Son of God. A wicked man is not *subjectum capax*, a subject capable of this assurance, *Eph.* 1. 13. *In whom also after ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.* It is not the hard stone, but the soft wax that receiveth the impression of the seal. If he hope for Salvation while he liveth, and dyeth in a natural condition, he shall lose his hope (*i*) and soul together: this presumption will prove self-delusion, and end in desperation. He is worse than a *Pharisee*, (*k*) whether he be a private person, or a *Preacher*, that liveth in gross sins, hating the power of godliness, and discouraging holiness, that yet blesseth God for election, justification, sanctification, and assured hope of glory.

d Eph. 2. 3. e Tit. 3.3. f 2 Tim.2.26. g Joh.5.40,43. Mark 2: 10. h 1 Tim.2.25. i Job 11.20. & 8. 3,4. & 8. 4. k Luke 18.11.

2. *Position.*

l Psal.77.1.to the 10.ver. & 88, 4.15,16. Isa.50.10. m 1 Joh.2.13,14. n 1 Pet.2.2. 2. That many of Gods dear Children (*l*) for a long time might remain very doubtful as to their present and eternal condition, and know not what to conclude, whether they shall be damned, or whether they shall be saved. There are believers of several growths in the Church of God: (*m*) Fathers, young men, Children, and (*n*) Babes; and as in most families there are more babes and children, than grown men, so in the Church of God, there are more weak doubting Christians, than strong ones, grown up to a full assurance. A Babe may be born and yet not know it, so a man may be born again and not be sure of it. Sometimes they think they have grounds of hope, that they shall be saved, sometimes they think they have grounds of fears, that they shall be condemned: not knowing which might be most weighty, like a pair of ballances, they are are in equal poyse. *Zach.* 14. 6. *And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear nor dark*

dark. It is spoken primarily of Gods providential dispensations, towards his Church in Gospel times; For a while she should live *in Crepuſculo* in twilight: in a mixt condition of light and darkness, comfort and affliction; like a man in a misty morning, that neither walketh in the dark, nor yet hath the light clear to see far before him; like *Paul* and the Marriners that saw neither Sun nor Stars for many days, (o) so might it be with a particular person, in reference to his spiritual condition.

(o) Acts 27.20.

By this you see,

First, We make a difference betwixt saving faith *as such*, and a full perswasion of the heart.

Secondly, That some of those that shall be certainly saved, might not be certain that they shall be saved; for the promise is made to the grace of faith, and not to the evidence of it. To Faith as true, and not as strong; they may be sure of Heaven, and yet in their own sense, not assured of Heaven. As an Infant may be born to a great estate, and have a certain title to it, but yet he might not know it, or make it out to himself or others. So that the Question is not *de certitudine objecti*, of the certainty of Salvation, but *de certitudine subjecti*, of the apprehension, sense, and knowledge of the believing person, concerning his salvation.

3. *Position.*

3. That a believer may not only in the general, gather from the word of God (p), from the death of Christ (q), from the glorious preparation God hath made (r), that many shall be infallibly brought to glory, but also that he in particular, shall be one of them. This must have its proof after; I therefore now pass on.

p Mat. 8 11 & 25.34.
q Mat. 20. 28.
r 1 Pet. 1. 4, 5.

4. *Position.*

4. That we are not to expect any voice from Heaven, or Gods sending of an Angel, or extraordinary revelation, to make us to know that we do believe, or shall be saved, but to make use of those helps, and means appointed by God, common to all believers, but yet sufficient for the obtaining of this particular Assurance. This I put in, because the Papists grant it may be got by extraordinary revelation, but not else; As it is their wicked practise to keep the people most ignorant of those things, of which they should have most knowledge, that following them with an implicite faith, & blind obedience, might not scruple at their Humane Traditions, and unwarrantable, and many (s) ridiculous Innovation, that have crept in amongst them, so they keep them most doubtful, where they should be most sure, and so the counsel

s *Bellarmin. de Baptismo. Tom. 3. lib 1. cap 25, 26, 27.* mentioneth 22. Ceremonies about Baptism, Exorcism, Salt, Spittle, Cross, Unction, Wax-taper lighted, in token that the baptized person is translated from the power of darkness unto light, &c.

counsel of *Trent* (*t*). If any may say that he knoweth, he shall certainly persevere, or infallibly be assured of his election, except he have this by special revelation, let him be Anathema. A wicked counsel that Anathematizeth a man for asserting that may be obtained, which God commandeth him to get, 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. *Make your calling, and election sure.*

5. *Position.*

5. That such as have been filled with divine joy, through well-grounded apprehensions of their present grace and future glory, might lose that assurance, and that joy (*u*), and this may be, 1. From God acting, 1. As (*x*) a Soveraign Lord. 2. As a wise God putting a more eminent difference btwixt Earth and (*y*) Heaven. Or, 2. From the buffetings of Satan. Or, 3. From themselves, 1. For the trial and exercise of some of their graces (*z*). Or, 2. For correcting them for sin (*a*). As, 1. For their backwardness to duty (*b*). 2. Slothfulness in duty. 3. Frequent strong actings of pride in and after duty. 4. Letting down their spiritual watch; and so, 5. Falling into some notorious transgression (*c*). Or, 6. For not setting a due esteem upon the comforts of the spirit (*d*). Or, 7. Insulting too much over weak believers; not exercising tender compassion to dejected drooping Christians. 8. For their too much Earthly-mindedness. 9. Not rising presently by repentance (*e*); for these reasons and the like, their Sun might be eclipsed, a winter of sorrows, might follow their summer joyes. They may Lose their evidence, but not their adherence; and though there shall not be any *intercision* of justification, yet there might be afterwards a *non-apprehension* of it.

6. *Position.*

6 That in divers men, there are divers degrees of this assurance, and in the same man different degrees at divers times, but in no man at any time, in this life perfection or degrees; For our understanding is imperfect, both as to the faculty and its acts. And though the mind is curing, yet it will not be perfectly cured in this life, from that darkness that befell it, by mans Apostacy from God. For we have but an imperfect knowledge of Faith and Love: and while we have but an imperfect knowledge of the premises, we cannot give a perfect assent to the conclusion. And no man hath such perfection of degrees, of the assurance of his salvation, *in an ordinary way*, as that one degree more cannot be added to the former; neither is there any repugnancy in asserting an infallible assurance, and denying a perfect assurance; for I infallibly know that there is a God, and that this

t *Si quis dixerit, hominem renatum & justificatum teneri ex fide ad credendum se certo esse, ex numero prædestinatorum, Anathema sit.* Concil. Triden. Sess. 6 can. 15. And again, *Si quis dixerit, magnum illud usque in finem perseverantiæ donum se certo habiturum absoluta & infallibili certitudine, nisi hoc ex speciali revelatione dederit. Anathema sit.* Concil. Triden. Sess. 6. Can. 16.

u Psal. 30. 7. Cant. 5. 6.

x Job 9. 17.

y Psa. 13. 1. with 1 Cor. 13. 12.

z Job 1. 1. with Job 13. 24. Isa. 8. 17.

a Isa. 59. 2.

b Cant. 5. 2, 3, 6.

c 2 Sam. 11. 4, 13. 15. comp. Psal. 51. 8, 12.

d Job 15. 11.

e Isa. 57. 17.

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this God is good and just; and yet I have not a perfect knowledge of a deity, or of his goodness and justice; for in this life we know but in part, 1 *Cor.* 13. 11, 22.

There are three ways that we come to a certainty. A threefold certainty.

1. There is a certainty that comes by sense, which cannot erre about its proper object, when there is a due distance, a fit dispositi-on of the Organ, and the medium rightly disposed: thus *Thomas* was certain of Christs resurrection from the dead. *John* 20. 25. *The other Disciples said unto him, we have seen the Lord, but he said unto them, except I shall in his hands the Print of the nails, and put my finger into the Print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.* Vers. 27. *He saith to* Thomas, *reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands, reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless but believing.* Vers. 28. *And* Thomas *answered and said, my Lord, and my God.* Though the other Disciples told him they had seen the Lord, yet he would not take it for a certainty from their report, except he had a certainty from his own sense. But the Papists do not only deny us a certainty of faith, but also a certainty of sense; for though in the Sacrament we see it is real bread, and taste it to be real bread, and feel and handle it as real bread; yet contrary to our sense, would have us believe, and say it is transubstantiated.

2. There is a certainty of science, or knowledge arising from first principles, received by all, that are proved by their own light, that cannot be demonstrated *a priori*, because there is nothing true before them; as a man cannot shew you the Sun but by its own light: So I certainly know, that both parts of a contradiction cannot be true; so I certainly know, that the whole is greater than any particular part.

3. There is a certainty of authority, or testimony, if the testimony be humane, it begets but a moral perswasion; for no humane testimony is of necessary verity, because truth is not necessarily, but contingently and mutably in the man that gives this testimony, and the testimony hath not its cogency or validity from it self, but from the qualifications of the person that bears the testimony, whence there is a gradual certainty in humane testimonies; only God is so *necessarily* true, that it should imply a contradiction that he should be God, and yet lye. *God cannot lye, Tit.* 1. 2. So that a Divine testimony begets a certainty of divine Faith; for what God saith, I undoubtedly know to be true, because truth is (*e*) essential to him; for if truth be necessary to the Testator, the truth of the testimony must necessarily be (*f*) true, so I

(*e*) Deut. 32. 4. & 34 6. Heb. 6 18. (*f*) Joh. 17. 17.

know that the impenitent unbelieving person that dieth without grace, and an interest in Christ, shall certainly (*g*) be damned, because God hath said it, as if I saw him in his misery; and I know that the Penitent, believing, self-denying, and sin-mortifying-Christian, shall be (*h*) saved because God hath said it, as certainly as if I saw him actually possessed of it already.

g Mar. 16. 16. Rom. 1. 4, 5. Heb. 11. 14.

h Mat. 5. 8. Rom. 8. 13. Acts 10. 43.

When faith hath this divine testimony to lean upon, it ariseth in some by degrees to a full assurance. There are especially four words in the Scripture, that set forth faith in its different degrees.

1. As it is said to be ὑπόστασις, *Heb.* 11. 1. *The substance, subsistence, existence of things:* Looking upon things future, as certain as if they were present; among the Hebrews there is usual a mutation of tenses, turning the future into the præter-tense. * Faith is the believers *Pathach*, making things to come as certain to him, as if he did already enjoy them; and putteth a date upon the joys of the life to come, before he is possessed of them. *Noahs* faith assured him of the flood, as certainly as if it had then been, when it was first (*i*) foretold; it is a *demonstration* of things not seen; faith seeth things that cannot be seen. *That* way of argumentation whereby errour is confuted, by *Aristotle* is called ἔλεγχος,* the word here used. But here for a certain conviction arising from divine authority, shewing us such things which sense cannot perceive and reason cannot comprehend. When faith thus represents these glorious things to come thus unto the believing soul, then there is πεποίθησις, a good perswasion of the heart, or a holy confidence; and from this perswasion there ariseth παρρησία, an humble boldness, or liberty, and freedom of speech to God in prayer, which *de jure* all believers have; these words you have together, in *Eph.* 2. 12. *In whom we have boldness, and access with confidence, by the faith of him.* And from these resulteth that desirable πληροφορία, a full assurance of a future enjoyment, of those things that faith presents unto us, and we are perswaded of our title to, and with liberty, freedom, and enlargedness of soul have prayed unto God for. So the Question is not concerning all men, but believers, and not whether all believers have it, but may have it; not by revelation, but by ordinary means; not whether they always keep it; nor about perfect, but certain infallible assurance in these words: thus,

* *In lingua sacra, vau cum patach sequente dagesh futurum in præteritum convertit, nam presens proprium, Hebræi nullum habent.*

i Heb. 11. 17.

ἔλεγχος ἐστὶ συλλόγισμος τῆς ἀντιφάσεως. *Arist. de reprehensil.* 1. *cap.* 8.

And so used by the Apostle.

2 Tim. 3. 16. The Scripture is profitable πρὸς ἔλεγχον To convince the enemies of the truth, it signifieth conviction, plain and evident. Joh. 8 9. & 16. 8

The question stated.

1 Arg. from special grace.

A believer may without extraordinary Revelation, certainly know and be infallibly assured of eternal life.

And this will be made evident by the proof of these two propositions.

1. That

1. That a believer without extraordinary revelation, might certainly know that he hath justifying faith, and unfeigned love to Christ, and that he is upright and sincere with God.

2 That there is an infallible connexion, between these special graces, and future glory. *That a man may certainly know his sincerity, faith, and love, is evidenced by these Particulars.*

1. God hath laid down in his word certain infallible γνωρίσματα, Characters, Signs, Discoveries, of sincerity, Justifying faith, and Unfeigned love to God, besides other topical heads, we may know it from the effects which it doth always produce; that where I see such an effect of faith, I know there is faith: And Papists must make us cast away all Logick, if we shall not have this granted. I see the broad clear light shining in mine eyes, therefore I know the Sun is risen; and when we see any sign, that is concomitant, or consequent, inseparable and proper to the thing of which it is a sign, we know that that thing is. A man that is sick and weak, yet feels his heart to leap and pant, he knows he is a living man, a man that discourseth, and rationally inferreth one thing from another, knoweth that he hath a reasonable soul, and that he is a man. There are as *certain Characters* in the word of God of sincerity, faith and love, as there are *plain injunctions* that we should be sincere, believe and love: Would God command a man to examine himself whether he be in the faith, if there were not rules suitable and sufficient, to direct us to know the nature of faith, and wherein it doth consist?

First proposition which sheweth that a man might know he hath saving Grace. *Posito effectu in esse effectus ponitur causa.*

2. God hath given to a man, a power to understand, consider, deliberate, and reflect upon himself, and judge of himself and of his ways, herein a man is above a bruit; a beast likes his pasture, but cannot know his propriety. Certainly a man that is not a stranger to himself, but a diligent observer of the actings of his soul, might know what they are, yea, and discern the moral modifications of these acts. *For Conscience is privy to the principle, and spring of all our actings, to the manner and the end.* If I love a man, by reflecting upon my self, I know I love him, and shall this noble power of the soul be only useless, in the greatest concernments of my soul? Can I know what I approve, esteem most, and delight in most, and breath, and pant after most, in other things and not in this? it is true, conscience is naturally blind, in spiritual things, but yet directed by the word, and inlightned by the

ψυχὴ φαὶ λείπεσθαι, ἐὰν τὴν ἀλήθειαν ὁρᾷ τὴν πρόσθεν, καὶ τὴν ἐν αὐτῇ. *Ancoratus I. 11. ff. 12. Edit. Lond. 1652.*

Τὰ ἴδια τῆς λογικῆς ψυχῆς, ἐστὶν ὁρᾶ ἑαυτὴν διαφερόντως, ἐστὶν ὁποίαν ἂν βούληται, πῶς. *Idem. I. 11. ff. 12.*

spirit,

spirit, might pass a judgment upon a man: For as the Moon borroweth light from the Sun, & so communicateth light unto the world, which else it could not do: so conscience receiving light from the word, and spirit, discovereth what else it could not do. So it is called the candle of the Lord, *Prov.* 20. 27. *The spirit of a man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly*: Not only taking notice of the outward acts in the life; but the inward motions of the heart, not only of some, but it hath a power to take cognizance of them all: Conscience is like the urine which discovereth whether a person be sound in health, or shews what his distemper is. By the Eccho, caused by the reflection of the sound, a man heareth his word after he hath spoken it: so by the reflecting power of conscience, a man views his actions after they are done, and hears his words after they be spoken. A man sees his spots or beauty in the glass, by the reflection of the species, that do represent them to his view. As *Josephs* brethrens consciences told them that they were true men, and not (*l*) spies; so conscience may truly tell a man, that he is sincere, and not an hypocrite: Thus conscience is said to be a witness; *Rom.* 9. 1. *I say the truth in Christ, I lye not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost*; to accuse, and to excuse, *Rom.* 2. 15. So it is a judge, condemning or acquitting, according as a mans state is found to be. So much Heathens have spoken of conscience.*

(*l*) Gen. 42 31.

* Τὸ συνειδὸς αὐτὴ ἐστι δικαστὴς ὁ δικαιοτάτης, ὅμα καὶ κοινοτάτης. *Hierocl. Comment in Pythag. Carm.*

Now that the Scripture containeth Characters of sincerity, and that a man comparing himself by those Characters, might certainly know that he is sincere; will be evidenced by these Scriptures. *Psal.* 19. 13. *Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins, let them not have dominion over me*: then mark [*then*] *shall I be upright.* When there is no one known sin, but a man is really willing (should be mortified and parted with, his *most beloved* sin that is nearest to him, which by way of propriety he may call his own, in an especial manner, which is the last sin a man parteth with; and if there be any sin which a man is unwilling to part with, and will keep a man off from Christ, it is his bosom sin, his darling; and the truth is, that if any man keep, love any one sin, which he will not let go, to close fully with Christ, let his profession be never so great, he is an hypocrite. Some men part with Christ for one lust, for one sin, *Luke* 18. 22. *When Jesus heard these things*, how far he had gone, how much he had done, *he said unto him, yet lackest thou one thing.* Love to his riches, and prizing them more than Christ was his ruine; one stab at the heart with

Unfeigned willingness to part with, and mortifie every sin, a sure sign of saving grace.

with a Pen-knife, will as certainly kill a man, as a thousand wounds with a sword; one disease that is mortal, will as certainly bring a man to his grave, as twenty; and one leak in a ship will sink it, as more. *Herod* did many things, but yet he would not let go his *Herodias*, *Mark* 6. 17, 18, 19, 20. It is a sure rule, that which a man loves most, he will endeavour to keep longest, skin for skin, all that a man hath will he give for his life. A man prizeth his right hand much, but his head more; and therefore to save his head, he will hold up his hand, and venture the loss of the one, to save the other. There may be many sins a man might love, but one especially, and he may be willing the one should be pared off to preserve that; but when he is willing to leave all, to indulge himself in none, no not his darling sin, it is a sign of sincerity. Consult these Scriptures, *Psalm* 17. 1, 3, 4. *Psalm* 119. 1, 2, 3, 6. *Job* 1. 8. and 2, 3, and 31. *cap.* throughout.

A man may know whether he be thus willing to part with sin.

Now a man may by diligent enquiry find out his beloved sin, and he may know, and his Conscience may bear him witness of his willingness to part with this, to have it subdued, and that by the grace of God he doth keep himself from it, that it bears not rule, nor dominion in his soul, *Psalm* 18. 23. *I was also upright before him.* How doth *David* manifest this, by the observation of his heart, and wayes in this particular; for it followeth, *and I kept my self from mine iniquity.* There is as much power of God required, and strength of grace to make a man part with his beloved sin, as all the rest. Thus *Hezekiah* knew his sincerity, *Isa.* 38 3. He had the testimony of his Conscience, and was sure of it, else how could he have made his appeal to God? *Remember now, oh Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.*

True Faith might be discovered in us.

Likewise that a man might certainly know he hath justifying Faith is proved from, 2 *Cor.* 13. 5. *Examine your selves whether ye be in the Faith prove your own selves: Know ye not your own selves, how that Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates.* Doth God so strictly charge us to know that, which cannot be known? that Faith here spoken of that we must enquire after, is a justifying Faith, appears from the Text:

1. By this Christ dwelleth in us, and so not by any other faith.

2. Because without this faith we are ἀδόκιμοι Reprobates, not as opposed to the Elect, but denoting persons unsound and hypocritical. It is also not a conjecture, but a certain knowledge that we are pressed

πειράζετε δοκιμάζετε. sed to obtain, by the word that the Holy Ghost useth, *search, make tryal*, as God tried *Abraham*, *Gen.* 22. 1. That his love to God, and fear of God appeared. Prove as the Gold-smith doth his Mettals in the Fire, or by the Touch stone; because he bids us prove it not so much by argument, as experience; for so the word is used, *Luke* 14. 19. He went to prove his Oxen: and forasmuch as we must prove our selves to be in Christ, we must not leave it uncertain; *for what is uncertain after tryal, is not proved.*

A note of true faith. Τιμὴ for ἔντιμον. *Pisc. in Loc.*

Besides that we do believe, we might know by the *judgments valuing, the wills chusing, and the affections loving Christ above all*, 1 Pet. 2. 7. *To you that believe he is precious*; Christ is an honour to the Believer, and Christ is most prized and valued by the Believer: And cannot a man know what he prizeth most? What he valueth and esteemeth most? what his understanding doth dictate to him, to be chosen above all? and whether his will doth chuse according to the dictates of the understanding? and the affections, love, and desire, are upon the wing to enjoy what the will doth make choice of? and grief filleth the heart when he cannot obtain it? Could not *Ahab* know that he prized *Naboths* Vineyard, when he grieved because he could not get it? and all that he had was lessened, by the want of what he prized so much? So doth the soul cry out, Riches is nothing without Christ, and Honour and Friends cannot remove the grief of his heart, till Christ comes in to his heart, and manifests himself there; cannot he know it, by his care to get, by his fear to lose, by his determining what to do, in case he must lose that which he prizeth most, or all other things besides? he will part withal, though very desirable, as a Marriner will cast away his richest Goods in a Tempest, to save his life; * which think you doth he prize most? A woman if her house be on fire, suffers all her Pewter to be consumed in the flames, so that she may but save her child, is it not apparent which she valueth most? All shall go that thou mayest keep Christ, if thou prize him most. This is known by the delight of the heart in the enjoyment of that which a man valueth most in the want of other things; thou canst delight in Christ, in poverty, affliction, in the midst of troubles in the world.

* As *Aristippus* cast his gold into the Sea, saying, *satius est, ut, haec per Aristippum, quam propter haec pereat Aristippus*, It is better these things perish by *Aristippus*, than *Aristippus* by these things

So likewise for love; is it not possible for a man to know that he loveth Christ above all? how else could *Peter* when asked three times by Christ, whether he loved him, answer three times, that he did love him, and did appeal to Christ that knew his heart, that he spake truly, because he knew he loved him sincerely, and this is observa-

observable that this was after *Peters* fall, by which he had learned to have a holy jealousie over his own heart, and Christ doth not intimate any deceitfulness in his heart in this, as he did before when he said (*m*) twice that he would not deny him. [m] Mat. 26. 33, 35.

By the effects of love, we may certainly know that we love him. Sign of true love to God.

1. By thy unfeigned desires to be like unto him, we love to imitate those whom we dearly love; love produceth assimilation, if he be holy so wouldst thou be, if he hate sin so dost thou.

2. By thy hearty desire to be united to him, to have him with thee, * his presence thou dost desire, his absence thou canst not bear without mourning and complaints, and wishing, oh that I could see him: oh that I could meet with him: and therefore thou goest from duty to duty, from ordinance to ordinance, from thy prayers in thy Closet to the Congregation, if thou mightest find him there, from the Word to the Sacrament, if thou mightest find him there, if he come unto thee thou rejoycest, if he withdraw himself thy soul is troubled. * *Nihil magis gregale quam amor, omnium rerum patientissimus, nisi solitudinis, societate gaudet & extorquet consortem. Nieremb. De art. Vo. p. 333.*

3. By thy great care to please him, fear to offend him, and * resigning thy self to him. When it grieveth thy heart to grieve thy Lord, and it breaks thy heart when thou breakest his Commands, *John* 14. 15. *If ye love me keep my Commandments*, verse 21. *He that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me*, —— 1 John 2. cap. 3. *And hereby we know that we know* (including this affection of love unto) *him*, verse 4. *He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him*, verse 5. *But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected*: Hereby we [know] that we are in him, 1 *John* 5. 3. *For this is the love of God, that we keep his Commandments, and his Commandments are not grievous*, because of the love we have to him that doth command. * *Se a se auferet amans, & amato tradit.*

4. By the love that we bear unto his image, in whomsoever we do see it, and love them that are like to Christ, so much that we could deny our selves of honours, and profits, were it necessary, and God should call us to it, to do them good; as we love Christ above all, so we love his likeness in others, and the believer for Christs sake above outward things, that if he be in necessity we do not only wish him well, but part with something, and if God & the Law of nature did not require us to lay it out; first for necessary provision for our families, could part with all to help them in their great (*n*) necessity. *Amor ecchoicus.* The soul that loves God, doth eccho to Gods Commands. *Ps.* 27 8. When thou saidest —— my heart said. ——

a Act. 4. 32, 34, 35, 37. b Joh. 3. 16, 17.

(n) necessity. Now this sincere love to the people of God, is an Evidence of the goodness of our spiritual condition, 1 *John* 3. 14. *We know that we have passed from death to life.* How, not by extraordinary revelation, but by this rational argumentation, *because we love the Brethren?* and verse 18. *My little Children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth.* And verse 19. *And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.*

But here the Papists doth not only cavil, but the drooping distressed Christian also questioneth all this, because of the deceitfulness of the heart. Alas the Scripture tells us, that the heart of man is desperately wicked, and deceitful above all things, (o) who can know it? And if the heart of man cannot be known, how can we say, we believe, or love God? For this consider these four things.

c From Jer. 17. 9. The Papists cavils, the drooping Christian doubts.

1. Another man cannot know it; I cannot certainly and infallibly know whether another man be sincere, or what his heart is; for it is the prerogative and excellency of God to be καρδιογνώστης one that knows the hearts of all men, *Acts* 1. 24.

2. A wicked mans heart is so wicked, and there is such a depth of wickedness in his heart, that he cannot come to the bottom of it.

3. If a man cannot know all the secret turnings, and windings of his heart, yet he may know the general scope, and frame of his heart.

4. If he could not do this of himself, yet assisted by the spirit of God, which all believers have received, he might know the frame, bent, scope, inclination of his own heart.

Thus far the first proposition, that a man may know that he hath sincere faith in Christ, and love to God. Now we proceed to the second.

2 Proposition, which shews the connexion, between grace and glory.

Second proposition is this; *That there is an infallible connexion between justifying faith, unfeigned love, and eternal glory.*

The Apostle tells us of some things that may be called ἐχόμενα σωτηρίας, *Heb.* 6. 9. *things that accompany salvation.* Having, or containing salvation, that are contiguous to salvation, that the one toucheth the other, this must be proved; for else though I know I do believe and love God sincerely to day, I can have no infallible assurance of salvation, because this may be lost before to morrow, or before I dye. Now this I shall endeavour to prove by these three following particulars.

1 From the verity of Gods promises.

1. *The undoubted verity of Gods promises, proveth an inseparable connexion*

nexion between sincere Grace and eternal Glory. Faith is the eye of the soul, and with it, through a promise, as through a Prospective glass, can the soul have a view of heaven and glory. What greater certainty or security can a man have, than the infallible promise of that God who is truth it self; who will not deny his Word, but the same Love and free Grace that moved him to infuse Grace into thy heart, and to make the promise, will move him also to give the thing promised, *John* 3. 16. *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him, should not perish, but have everlasting life*, John 5. 24. *He that believeth hath everlasting life:* He hath it in the Promise, he hath it in the first-fruits, *Rom.* 8. 23. —— *But we our selves also which have the first fruits of the Spirit.* ——The *Jews* by offering their first fruits, did testifie their thankfulness to God for what they had received, and hopes of the full crop in due time. He *hath everlasting life*, then it must not end, *Mark* 16. 16. *He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved: He that believeth not, shall be damned.* As certainly as the unbeliever shall be cast into utter darkness, so certainly shall the believer be partaker of the glorious inheritance of the Saints in Light. *The Promise is as true as the Threatning*, Acts 16. 30, 31. There you see a poor convinced, wounded sinner, under the load of guilt, that had a sight of his lost, undone, deplorable condition, coming to the Apostles, and speaking after this manner, *Ye men of God, ye Servants of the Lord, if there be any way for me, who have been so great a sinner, that have done enough ten thousand times over, to damn my own soul; if there be any certain way to avoid Damnation, I beseech you tell me, if there be any means by which I might certainly be saved, as you pity my sinful soul, my bleeding heart, my wounded conscience, tell me what it is, declare it to me.* What is the Apostles answer? *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.* The Apostle speaks not doubtingly, *perhaps* thou shalt be saved, perhaps thou mayest be damned. If thou get Faith *it may be* thou mayest get Heaven. Alas! what relief, peace, satisfaction would this have been to his wounded Conscience? But they speak *peremptorily*, *Believe and thou shalt be saved.* So that prove thou, that thou hast Faith, and these Scriptures prove thou shalt have salvation.

The Connexion therefore will not be questioned, if I believe I shall be saved; this God hath promised, but shall not a believer lose his Faith in Christ, and lose his Love to God; for the Remonstrants grant that a believer *qua talis*, as a believer cannot fall away, nor come short of glory; but *qui talis est*; He that is a believer may fall

away totally and finally, and so cannot have assurance of salvation, because he hath no assurance that he shall persevere in his believing and state of Grace. To this I oppose these places of Scripture, 1 *Thes.* 5. 23, 24. *And the very God of peace sanctifie you wholly*, and I pray *God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless*, (therefore preserved from Apostacy, which is exceedingly blameworthy) till when; *till the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*; is this a prayer, and not a promise? Yea, it is a prayer indited by the spirit of God, and hath a promise following it, if you will read on. *Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.* Here the Apostle that had the spirit, prayeth for perseverance; and the Apostle that had the spirit, promiseth perseverance. Certainty then of perseverance doth not make men careless in the use of means, nor prayers needless; by praying a man obtains the thing promised, and the certainty that he hath by the promise of obtaining, puts life into his prayers, *Phil.* 1 6. *Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it* ἐπιτελέσει, will finish it, will perfect it,) *until the day of Jesus Christ*, 1 Pet. 1. 5. *Kept* (garrisoned) *by the power of God through faith unto salvation*, John 10.28,30. 1 Cor. 10, 13. —— But *will with the temptation make away to escape*; therefore they shall persevere, for to enable the believer to persevere in all tentations, is to make a way to escape the destruction and hurt the tentation tendeth to. God doth promise this absolutely, *Jer.* 32. 38, 40. *And they shall be my people, and I will be their God, and will make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good, but I will put my fear into their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.* They shall not forsake God, because God will not leave them, *Ezek.* 36.27. *And I will put my spirit into you, and* [cause] *you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgements, and do them.* As absolute as was the *Covenant* with *Noah*, that he would not drown the world, *Isa.* 54.9,10. Besides, as God doth make conditional promises of pardon and salvation to those that believe and repent, so he doth promise to give the condition, *Ezek.* 36. 25, 26, 27. And herein is one special difference betwixt the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace; for God promised happiness to man under the Covenant of works, if he persevered in yielding perfect obedience, but did not promise to keep him from departing from him. So that a conditional promise is sufficient security, where the condition is certain, and doth not infer the uncertainty of the promise, but where the condition is doubtful. These places also

Φερεμένους. Φρουρεῖσθαι denoteth more safety than φυλάττεσθαι

prove

prove the constancy of Grace, that it shall not be lost, 1 *John* 3. 9. *Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin*; doth not make a trade of sin, cannot sin so, as by sin totally and finally to fall *for his seed remaineth in him.* Whilest the Papists and Arminians have endeavoured to bite asunder the Golden chain, whereby Grace and Glory are linked together, *This place of Scripture* hath broke their teeth. *Bellarmine* acknowledgeth, that this is the hardest place of Scripture for him to answer, In all the Book of God, *John* 4. 14. It is set forth by a well of water springing up to everlasting life. A believer is born of incorruptible seed, 1 *Pet.* 1. 23. An hypocrite, like a stake, hath no root, and therefore may be plucked up, but a real believer hath grace rooted in him, and therefore like a tree moted in the earth stands fast.

ἁμαρτίαν ποιεῖν *differt* ἀφ' ἁμαρτάνειν. *Simpliciter accepto.*

Bellar. Tom. 4. de Justif. lib. 3. cap. 15.

But it be objected, no man can certainly be assured of salvation, because God hath no where made a particular promise to any person, by name, and nothing is to be believed with a Divine faith, but what is expressly contained in the Word of God. He hath not said, *Thou Cornelius shalt be saved.*

To this is answered, *That all particulars are contained under the Universals.* If all men be rational creatures, and *Cornelius* be a man, we must conclude that *Cornelius* is a rational creature. How will they prove that there is an infallible certainty, that every particular person shall come to judgement. For God hath not said, and thou *Cornelius shalt come to judgement.* In the commands that are given to all men, that they shall not commit Adultery. How will they prove that this reaches every particular man, for where hath God said, *Thou Cornelius shalt not commit Adultery?* Thus this is proved from the infallibility of Gods promises.

2. From the prevalency of Christs prayers.

Secondly, *The prevalency of Christs intercession for those that do believe and love God, doth demonstrate the inseparable connexion between Grace and Glory.* For we know, that what Christ prayeth for shall be granted, *John* 11. 42. *And I know that thou hearest me always.*

* *Certo certius concludere nobis licet, Christi preces nunquam rejectum iri. Arminius at. de sacer. Christi. p. 87.*

* *Arminius* layeth it down as a certain truth, that Christs prayers are never rejected. Now Christs prayers for believers are not conditional, *Father, if their Faith fail not, let them be saved,* but Christ prayeth, *that their Faith might not fail, and that they may be saved.* Christs Intercession doth not exclude the conditions of Faith and Perseverance, but is, that we may believe, persevere, and so infallibly be saved, *Luke* 22. 32. *I have prayed that thy Faith fail not.* And *Arminians* grant this prayer of Christ to be absolute, praying not for *Peters* salvation, if he should persevere, but praying that he may persevere.

ἐξητήσατο ὑμᾶς.

Neither is this prayer peculiar for *Peter*, excluding the rest; for though he mentioneth *Peter* yet he speaketh to all, and of them all, *Simon, Simon*, Satan hath desired *you*, that he may sift *you* as wheat; and when he should be recovered from his fall, he should strengthen his Brethren; whereby it is manifest, that Christ had respect unto the perseverance of the rest, as well as to *Peters*: And the like intercession Christ makes for all that should believe, as appeareth from the 17th. of *John*, which was not a prayer onely suitable to the condition, and cases, and exigencies of the Apostles at that time, but a pattern of his interceding now in Heaven. So much * *Arminius* grants, *John* 17. 15. *I pray that thou wouldest keep them from evil*; therefore from Apostacy the greatest evil. Not that they should be free from persecution, but from being overcome by persecution, that it may not separate them from him: ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ, the Article shews the evil to be specially Sin and Satan, *verse* 20. *Neither pray I for these alone: but for them also which shall believe on me through their word*; And he prayeth for their glorification, *verse* 24. *Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me, where I am.* (Christ then, as to his Divine nature, was in Heaven, a proof that he was God) *That they may behold my glory which thou hast given me.*

* *Contin't illud caput 17. Joh. perpetuum canonem precum & intercessionis, quas Christus patri offert in Cœlis quanquam enim Christus adhuc in terra existens illam precationem recitaverit, tamen ad statum illius sublimem in Cœlis pertinet proprie, & describi voluit, ut perpetua nobis esset in terris solatio. Armin. orat. de Sacerd. Christi.* pag. 17.

3. From the inability of all things to separate betwixt Christ and a Believer.

Thirdly, *The inability of all things that may set themselves to make a breach and separation between God and the gracious soul, doth demonstrate an inseparable connexion between grace and glory.* Famous is that place to this purpose, in *Rom.* 8. 35, 37, 38. Where the question is propounded by the Apostle, whether any thing shall separate betwixt God and his people and hinder their salvation? And the Apostle saith No, where observe these particulars.

Interrogatio negantis.

First, The Interrogation, Who shall separate? That is, none shall. For thus an Interrogation is a strong Negation. *p.*

p. Mat 23. 33. Heb. 2. 3.

Secondly, Here is a particular application of this, to individual persons; not only Believers, or Elect in general. Who shall separate [us?]

Thirdly, A particular enumeration of those evils that might threaten this separation, tribulation, persecution, &c. And whereas some assert their own wills may be the cause of their Apostacy, and that not mentioned in the Text. It is not said their own wills shall not separate them. I answer, it is included, when it is said, no other creature, except they will exempt mens will from the creation.

Fourth

Fourthly, His glorying and triumphing over all these, ὑπερνικῶμεν, more than Conquerours. *Over-overcome.*

Fifthly, In whose strength it is that we are enabled to keep our stedfastness, that maketh it the more certain, in the strength of Christ, and not our own.

Sixthly, His confidence, and he had the spirit of God, πέπεισμαι, *I am perswaded*, though sometimes it signifies no more than a moral perswasion, or probable conjecture, yet it doth not exclude a certainty of knowledge, *Rom.* 14. 14. *I know, and am perswaded by the Lord Jesus Christ, that there is nothing unclean of it self*; That is, I certainly know, it must therefore be judged by the circumstances of the Text.

Seventhly, It is not said only, they *shall not separate*, but that they *cannot* separate us from the love of God; whether love be taken actively or passively, for the love wherewith we love God, or the love wherewith we are beloved by God, is not now material; it is true of both. The sum of this might be gathered up in this Syllogism. Those that may certainly know, that they do sincerely believe, and love God, may certainly know that they shall be saved; but a real believer may certainly know that he doth sincerely believe and love God; therefore he may certainly know that he shall be saved.

Thus far of the first Argument from our Graces, and the infallible connexion between them and glory, because I may be judged to be too long in this, I will be shorter in the rest, that I may come to the second part of the Question.

2. *A Believer may know that he shall be saved, because he may know he hath the spirit of God dwelling in him.* The in-dwelling of the spirit is proper and peculiar to believers; for the world cannot receive him, *John* 14.17. That they have the spirit, they may know by the special effects which he produceth in that heart where he dwells, by his convincing, humbling, sanctifying work, 1 *Cor.*6.11. By inabling them to make progress in their sanctification, 2 *Cor.*3.18. By his special assistance vouchsafed to them in holy prayer, which sighs and groans with cannot be uttered, *Rom.*8.26,27. By inabling them to mortifie their sins more and more, *Rom.*8.13. 2. Argument from the inhabitation of the Spirit.

Now by all these effects, the in-dwelling of the spirit of God in the heart of a Believer being manifested, it doth assure him of three things.

First, By the inhabitation of the spirit, he may know his eternal Election, 2 *Thes.*2.13. *Because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the spirit.*

Secondly,

Secondly, By this we may be sure of our Adoption, *Gal.* 4. 6. *And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father.*

Thirdly, By the spirit dwelling in us, we may be sure of Eternal salvation, *Ephes.* 1.13 14. *In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the Word of Truth, the Gospel of your salvation, in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the holy spirit of Promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.* In which Text there are two Words that are to be considered; the Spirit is a seal, it is an earnest; a seal among men, is, 1. For *Secrecy.* 2. For *Distinction.* 3. For *Authority.* 4. For *Certainty.* A writing sealed is authentick, and for ensuring. It is an earnest, so also called, 2 *Cor.* 1.22. a Metaphor taken from buyers and sellers. An earnest among men, is part of payment, and though it be but small, yet it is sufficient to secure you of that which is of very great value. Though there be no commutative Justice betwixt God and the Creature, yet here it hath its weight. There is this difference betwixt an earnest and a pawn; A pawn might be fetcht from his hands to whom it was committed to keep, but an earnest binds a man to stand to his agreement, or at least he must lose his earnest: But God will give the whole inheritance, and will not lose his earnest. For our greater comfort we may take notice of these particulars in this Text, and the 2 *Cor.* 1.21,22. compared together. 1. The person sealing, the *Father.* 2. In whom, in *Christ.* 3. With what seal, the *spirit* of Promise, where are all the persons in the Trinity making us sure of our inheritance. 4. When, after ye believed. 5. The end, subordinate, the certainty of our salvation, a seal, an earnest: ultimate, the praise of his glory. 6. *How long* this seal and earnest shall thus assure us, and that is, till we have the compleat possession of what it is an earnest.

ἐσφραγίσθητε, ἀρραβών.

ἀρραβών, *Peculiariter dicitur pars aliqua persoluta pretii in venditione interveniendis, ut fides fiat reliquæ persolvendæ summæ. Beza.*

3 Argument from instances, *ab esse ad posse valet consequentia.*

3. *Many have without extraordinary revelation obtained a certain knowledge, that they should be saved;* Therefore it is possible: That which hath been done, is not impossible, 2 *Tim* 4.7,8. *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course; henceforth there is a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge will give me at that day: and not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearing:* This certainty the Apostle gathers from his sincerity and constancy in his Obedience and Faith, and declareth the same certainty that all those have, that know they love his appearing, *Heb.* 10.34. *Knowing in your selves, that ye have in Heaven a better and enduring substance. Par parium est ratio, & par affirmatio.*

4. God

4. *God commands us to make our calling and election sure, therefore it is possible*; Gods commands are not evidences of our ability, but yet are of the possibility of the duty that he commands; they do not tell us what we by our own strength can do, but yet they declare what by our diligence and Gods assistance may be done, 2 *Pet.* 1.10. And if we can make our election sure (not in it self, for so it is, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. but to our selves) we may be sure of salvation, *Rom.* 8. 30. *Whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified.* 4. Argument: *Nemo tenetur ad impossibile.*

5. *The Papists grant a certainty of hope, therefore we may have a certainty of Faith*; for by Faith we must first apprehend the object, before we can hope for it, and according to the measure, degrees, and strength of our Faith, is our hope; he that hath but a weak faith, cannot have a strong hope. If *Abraham* had staggered in his faith, he had not been stedfast in his hope. *Rom.* 15. 13. *Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace, in believing that you may abound in hope.* So much for the possibility of this assurance. 5 Argument: πληροφορία τῆς ἐλπίδος. *Heb* 6.11. sup. oseth. πληροφορεῖσθαι τῆς πίστεως. *Heb.*10 12.

Now I come to the second part of the question, to speak to those that know not, that they have eternal life, and discern not their spiritual condition, and those may be of two sorts. Second part of the Case.

1. Some that *for want of diligence in the use of means*, are uncertain what their condition is.

2. Such as have made enquiry, and long earnestly to be resolved in this great Question, whether they be Converted, Changed, and shall be saved, or no, and yet cannot find it out. I would speak a few things to the first of these, because the greatest part know not their condition, through their own carelesness and negligence, that through the *sloathfulness* of their own hearts, or the *difficulty* of the work, or *multiplicity* of worldly care and business, are yet in the dark. That examin their Shop book oftner, and more diligently than they do the book of their own hearts; that make oftner enquiry whether they grow rich, than whether they wax good. If I may judge of other mens hearts by mine own, in this point, and not be thought to have too hard, and uncharitable thoughts of them, I would conclude we are all guilty of negligence in this case, and therefore walk in the dark, and remain in uncertainties about the salvation of our immortal souls, which should be the first thing we should make sure of, because it is of the greatest and everlasting concernment. Ah Christian? chide thy own sloathful, lazie, negligent heart; shame thy self out of this care-

careleſneſs; what, canſt thou eat, and drink, and ſleep, and trade as quietly as if thou wert paſt all danger? And yet thou doſt not know whether thou ſhalt be damned, or ſaved. Awake, oh my ſoul! Rouſe up thy ſelf, and look after thine eternal ſtate; it is no matter whether thou art rich or poor, honourable or contemptible, the great queſtion, that with the greateſt ſerioufneſs is to be reſolved, is whether thou haſt grace or no, whether Chriſt be thine or no; certainly careleſs perſons ſhould be ſtirred up to look after their eternal ſtate, and thoſe that are diligent need ſome conſiderations to make them more diligent, and therefore the Apoſtle *Peter* writeth to thoſe that had obtained like precious faith with himſelf, calling upon them, urging and exhorting them to make their calling and election ſure, 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. For this end let me propound theſe following queſtions to thee that art negligent in this great concernment, and as thou readeſt, give thy ſelf a ſober ſerious anſwer.

3 Queſtions propounded to ſloathful Chriſtians.

1. Is it nothing to thee, to live in the daily neglect of a commanded duty; is it not the injunction of thy Lord, whoſe ſervant thou doſt profeſs thy ſelf to be, that thou ſhouldeſt give all diligence in this matter, and wilt thou not give any at all; or not at all proportionable to the weightineſs of thy concernment herein? might not this raiſe doubts and jealouſies in thy ſoul, that thy condition is not good becauſe thou art not diligent to know, and to prove it to be good? eſpecially when thou doſt conſider that thy Lord commands thy diligence herein: Mighteſt not thou queſtion the ſincerity of thy obedience to any of Gods commands, for want of the univerſality of it, extending it ſelf to all Gods commands? Tell me Chriſtian, why hath God given us this charge? Read 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. *Wherefore, the rather Brethren give all diligence to make your calling and election ſure*; is it not the ſame God that commands thee to pray, that commands thee to make ſure of Hevean? didſt thou never read theſe words; or haſt thou read them, and thrown them by, and thought this counſel is not fit to be followed, nor this command to be obeyed? What canſt thou ſay for thy neglect? Look a little into the Text, what is it that you are commanded to make ſure of; Houſe or Land? If it had been ſo, it is like thou wouldeſt have obeyed; but it is ſomething better, infinitely better, whether thou art effectually called, and eternally elected; and is this to be done ſloathfully, careleſly; or doth not God require thy diligence, thy utmoſt diligence, nay all thy diligence, nay thy ſpeedy diligence without delay, thy painful diligence without indulging thy ſelf in thy ſloth; thy continual diligence without weari-

Προθυμίας.

wearineſs, or till thou hadſt got a certainty of thy ſtate? and ſhouldeſt thou not do this, *rather* than any temporal concernment? ſhouldeſt not thou make ſure of Grace, *rather* than of riches; of Heaven, *rather* than the earth; in an intereſt of God, *rather* than of earthly poſſeſſions.

2. Is it not a ſhame that wicked men ſhould daily uſe more care to make ſure of fading vanities, than thou doſt to make ſure of better and more laſting riches? what, is not the ſoul better than the body? or are things temporal better worth than things Eternal? how do they cark and care, what muſt we eat, & what muſt we drink; and how ſhall we be ſure of ſomething to keep us when we are old? doſt thou do thus for thy ſoul, how ſhall I get my ſins pardoned, my nature ſanctified, and my ſoul ſaved? how ſhall I be ſure of an eternal heavenly houſe above, when this mouldring cottage of my body is tumbled down? doth it not ſhame thee to ſee the diligence of worldly men, that if they buy houſe, or land, they look narrowly to the writing, and ask advice and counſel, whether the Title will be good, that he may be ſure, and not defrauded? The old Uſurer will not let forth his monies, but he will have good ſufficient ſecurity, both for principal and intereſt, becauſe he ſaith and knows it is good to be ſure; nay, yet farther, doth it not ſhame thee that many men ſhould take more pains for Hell, than thou doſt for Heaven, and to be ſure of damnation, than thou doſt to be certain of thy ſalvation? how do they daily drudge in the ways of wickedneſs, committing ſin with greedineſs, with both hands, heartily, with their whole ſoul, as though they ſhou'd not come to Hell ſure enough, or ſoon enough; while thou art dull, flat, liſtleſs in thy duties to God, and not praying heartily as for thy ſoul: Do not wicked men take more pains in breaking the Sabbath, than thou doſt in keeping of it; and do not they ſcorn duties, more than thou doſt prize and practiſe them: But further, *Operoſe nihil agunt.*

3. Doſt thou not too much forget thine own Mortality; doſt thou indeed conſider that thou art haſting into an Eternal ſtate, and muſt within theſe few years, months, yea weeks, enter into an unchangeable condition? doſt thou indeed believe Heaven or Hell is before thee? that eternal death, or eternal life, are at the end of this fading, ſhort, momentany life? or doſt thou judge it to be indifferent, whether it be the place of thy everlaſting abode? what is the matter? Good Lord! what ſloth, ſtupidity, negligence, hath poſſeſſed our hearts! ſurely, if thou didſt believe that thou mighteſt be in thy Grave to morrow, wouldſt thou not make ſure of Heaven to

day? if the leaſe of thy houſe be almoſt expired; and the Landlord hath given thee warning to provide thee another habitation, for he will not ſuffer thee to renew it any more, doſt thou not preſently enquire of thy friends, and of thy neighbours; Sirs, can you tell me where I may have a convenient dwelling, I have but a little time in the houſe where I am, and I have had warning to go out by ſuch a day? Art thou not careful to have an houſe ready to go to upon the very ſame day thou leaveſt the former? Alas! *man*, doſt thou not know the leaſe of thy life is almoſt out? Nay, doſt thou not know that thou art only a Tenant at will, and God may turn thee out at an hours, at a moments warning? and yet doſt thou not make ſure of an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens? hath not God given thee warning? did thy head never ake? was thy heart never ſick? ſurely if thou didſt not forget thy own mortality, thou wouldſt be more careful, painful, diligent in thy buſineſs. I ſee frequently men upon their ſick-beds, when they think they *muſt* dye, begin to inquire after heaven, and how they may know their ſins are pardoned, and whether their ſouls ſhall be ſaved; becauſe the apprehenſion of the neerneſs of the grave doth *rouze* them; and for all thou knoweſt, thou, though now in health, mayeſt be as ſoon in thy grave, as he that lyeth ſick. God can ſtop thy breath when he pleaſeth. Art thou mortal? look then after thy ſoul.

4. Is not this too great a ſleighting of the comforts of the ſpirit? of God? of Chriſt and happineſs? is there not ſo much excellency in all theſe, and ſweetneſs in diſcerning thy propriety to them, as to *provoke* thee to diligence, in making ſure of them?

5. Doſt not thou know that others have looked long after it, and doſt thou think thou ſhalt come ſo eaſily to it? others have prayed much, and ſearched themſelves often, and yet have not been able to ſatisfie all their own doubts, whether they have gone farther than ever any Hypocrite went, and doſt thou think it will be ſo eaſily diſcerned, whether thy heart be ſincere with God? many find it a hard thing to diſtinguiſh betwixt the higheſt degrees of common grace in Hypocrites, and the loweſt degrees of ſaving grace in a true Believer.

6. Doſt thou think that Conſcience will never be awakened to diſquiet thee, when thou canſt not ſatisfie it about thy ſalvation? will it alwayes be in this ſpiritual ſlumber? doſt thou think that ſickneſs will never come? and that death will never come? and that trouble will never ſeize upon thee? when thy conſcience ſhall be ſo alarmed, that thou wouldeſt give all thou art worth to know what ſhall become of thy

thy soul? oh then for an infallible evidence of Gods love! oh then that thou mightst know whether God will pardon thy sin and save thy soul! oh dreadful case! when thou comest to dye, and Conscience shall accuse thee for thy sloath, when thou feelest thy spirit begin to fail, and apprehendest thy self near the grave, and Conscience rageth, and is not at peace, because thou dost not know whether thou shalt go, to Heaven or Hell. It is dreadful, doleful, sad, to hear these complaints from a dying man: oh woe is me, that I must take my farewel of all my friends, and death is impatient of delay, and yet I cannot say my sins are pardoned! oh wo is me, though I lye a dying, I cannot say my sins are pardoned! within a little while my body must be carried from my Bed to my Grave; but oh it breaks my heart that I cannot tell whether my soul, my precious (and yet too much neglected) soul shall be carried to Heaven by holy Angels? or dragged down to Hell by curſed Devils! oh that God would grant me a month or two, a little longer, that I may work out my salvation! But thy Conscience shall tell thee, thou hadst time, but thou didst mis-spend it; thou hadst it, but thou didst not improve it in getting this grand question resolved, Whether thou hadst made thy peace with God. Consider now how dreadful it will be, when Conscience is awakened, and thou in this case unresolved.

7. If thou be a true Christian, yet herein dost thou not act too much like the careless ungodly World? they take no care to make sure of Heaven, and wilt thou justifie their practice, and harden them in it? There are some carnal ones in the family; a carnal husband, or a carnal wife, or ungodly children, or graceless servants, that minds not God, nor care for their souls, that look not after Heaven; and wilt thou be guilty of incouraging them in their carelesness, and hardening them in their forgetfulness of God, by thine own remissness? but if thou wast serious in the use of means, pressing, following hard after God, thy strictness might shame them out of their wickedness, and might reflect upon themselves, if such a one that lives so circumspectly, and taketh so much pains in duties, and yet doubteth, and fears, and would fain be resolved; what a careless wretch am I, never to regard my own soul; they are ignorant of God, and his excellency; of Christ, and his beauty; of Grace, and its necessity; and therefore desire them not, nor care to make sure of them; but God hath opened thine Eyes, to see all these. Stir up thy self then to get a certainty of thine interest in them.

8. Art thou not too much guilty of Hypocrisie, when thou goest to

the Table of the Lord, and yet doſt not give diligence to make thy calling and election ſure; nor to have the certain knowledge of the pardon of thy ſin, and of thy peace with God? is not the Lords Supper an ordinance for the helping the right receivers to aſſurance of the pardon of their ſin, in the blood of Chriſt? is it not for that end a ſeal of the covenant of grace; if thou ſayeſt thou uſeſt it for this end, why then doſt thou look after it no more, when thou returneſt from that Ordinance?

Having premiſed theſe things to awaken you, and rouſe you out of your ſloath, ſuppoſing that now you are reſolved to take any courſe that can be preſcribed from the Word of God. That thou art one, who weepeſt, mourneſt, complaineſt becauſe thou doſt not diſcern thy ſpiritual condition; I ſhall lay down my advice to thee in theſe following Directions.

1. *Direction.*

Directions to get aſſurance.

1. *Get ſome Characteriſtical diſtinguiſhing ſigns of true ſaving Grace, by thy ſerious ſearching the Word of God.* God hath told thee in his Word who ſhall be damned, and who ſhall be ſaved; though not *by* name, yet by the qualifications, by which they are deſcribed. In the Bible there are the Statute Laws of Heaven, and the ſtanding Rule by which thou muſt be tryed, thou muſt ſtand or fall, be eternally bleſſed, or everlaſtingly miſerable; as thy condition is conſonant to, or various from the infallible Characters of ſaving Grace contained in the Scripture. Thou that haſt deſerved eternal death mighteſt know before the day of the general Aſſize whether thou ſhalt be acquitted or condemned.

But if thou know not how to gather theſe thy ſelf, go to ſome godly faithful Miniſter, and deſire him to give thee ſome Characters of a ſincere Chriſtian from the Word of God, wherein hypocriſie and ſincerity are differenced, and be ſure the ſigns thou tryeſt thy ſelf by, be not ſhort of ſaving grace, or that will not hold tryal, or bear thee out at the day of judgment. I cannot here inſert any, partly becauſe I have not room to croud them in, partly becauſe by what I have already laid down under that head, that a man might know that he is ſincere, believeth and loveth God; ſomething to this purpoſe might be picked up.

2. *Direction.*

2. When thou haſt thus furniſhed thy ſelf, thy next work muſt be *to ſet thy Conſcience on work, and reflect upon thy own heart, and upon the motions of thy will, and compare thy ſelf with the Word of God.* The former

mer-sent you to study the book of Gods Word, this calleth upon you to study the book of your own hearts. The other is a direct act of the understanding, this is a reflect act to make a judgement of thy state; whether there be a Transcript of those things in thine own heart: for every Believer hath the Gospel-laws written upon the table of his soul by the spirit of God. Assurance cannot be had ordinarily, without the examination of our own Hearts, for assurance is the certain knowledge of the conclusion, drawn from the premises, one out of the Scripture, the other by the reflect act of the understanding, or Conscience, thus: He that believeth and is justified, shall be saved; that is the Word of God: Then by the search of his own heart, he must be able to say; But I believe and am justified, and from these two, doth result this assurance that he may conclude: therefore I shall be saved. *Luke* 15. 8. The woman that had lost a piece of silver, did light a Candle, and swept her house, and thereby found what she had lost. Conscience is this Candle, the Scripture is the fire at which it must be lighted, and self-examination is the broom whereby the heart is swept, and so the state of the soul which before was not discerned, comes to be discovered.

But here take heed thy heart be not rash in affirming or denying, suspend the determination till thou hast made a narrow, strict inquiry into thy soul, as thou lovest thy soul do not *presume*, as thou valuest thy comfort do not deny any work of the spirit of God upon thy heart, but with thankfulness acknowledg any thing that thou canst discern to be a fruit of the spirit. *Search throughly, and judge impartially.* Say therefore to thy soul, to make thy self more serious in this weighty work; thou art now, oh my soul, in the presence of the great Heart-searching God, that knoweth certainly what thy state and condition is, what thy will, heart, and affections are: thou must, oh my soul! shortly stand at the Bar of God, as now thou standest at the bar of conscience, and must be searched, judged by the Lord, and have the sentence of Life or Death, of absolution or condemnation, according as thy state shall be found to be. Consider, oh my soul, thou art now about the greatest concernment in the world, many have been mistaken, many are now tormented in Hell, that once thought their condition was good, it is not therefore for thee to flatter thy self, and it is easie to be mistaken, and if thou shouldst be mistaken, it is as much as thy soul is worth, if thy condition be bad, and thou conclude it to be good, thou wilt but go more merrily to Hell: It is as much as thy comfort is worth, if thy condition be good, and thou con-

Deus infinitus.

conclude it to be bad; thou wilt go more ſadly to Heaven, and wilt be unthankful to thy God, and keep the glory from him, and the comfort from thy ſelf. Thou art indited, oh my ſoul! arraigned and found guilty, that thou haſt ſinned againſt the Lord, the queſtion is, Whether thou haſt repented, and art pardoned? I charge thee therefore, oh my ſoul! that thou ſpeak truly, and anſwer rightly to theſe demands.

Art thou ſo far convinced of ſin, of the vileneſs of its own Nature, the evil in it, the evil after it, that thou art weary of it; thou groaneſt under it, thou loatheſt it, and art unfeignedly willing to be broken from every ſin, without any reſerve? and what thou canſt not extirpate, that thou wilt bewail? Art thou ſo far convinced of thine own inſufficiency to help thy ſelf, that all thy tears cannot waſh thee, and make thee clean, all thy duties cannot ſave thee, that though thou dareſt not neglect them as means, yet thou dareſt not rely upon them as a Saviour; ſo that thou ſeeſt the neceſſity of a Chriſt; the ſuitableneſs of Chriſt? the ſufficiency and willingneſs of Chriſt, offering himſelf unto thee in the Goſpel, calling to thee, crying after thee, ſaying, ah thou *poor, miſerable, forlorn ſinner*, thou haſt undone thy ſelf, wilt thou now be cured? thou haſt wounded thy ſelf, wilt thou let me apply a plaiſter of my blood, my healing, pacifying blood, to thy bleeding ſoul, to thy diſtreſſed, diſquieted Conſcience? all that I expect from thee, is to take me for thy Lord and Husband, to rule, govern, ſanctifie, and ſave thee, thou haſt withſtood thine own mercy, I have often asked thee, and thou haſt often denied me, but yet if now thou wilt receive me, behold I bring pardon along with me, and peace along with me, and eternal life, and every good thing along with me; yet mercy is not gone, it is not yet denied to thee. When thou mayſt gather ſuch things from the Word of Chriſt, put the queſtion to thy ſelf, what ſayeſt thou, oh my *ſoul*, thou heareſt the gracious words of the Lord Jeſus, he commands thee to come, he inviteth thee to come, he promiſeth thee acceptance if thou come, art thou willing, or art thou not? wilt thou perſevere in thy former denial, and be damned, or wilt thou yield, and be ſaved? wilt thou conſent to take him for thy husband, and ſubſcribe unto his terms? doth thy judgment value him above all? and thy will chuſe him above all? and thy affections go out after him above all things in the world? as a woman doth in all thoſe three reſpects, when ſhe taketh a man to be her husband.

Art thou ſo far convinced of the excellency of the everlaſting glory of the Saints, and the perfection of that happineſs that is above, as it is a ſtate of perfect *Holineſs*, as well as a ſtate of real *Happineſs*, that thou

thou art willing to part with any thing that might hinder thee from obtaining of it, and do any duty prescribed by God, though displeasing to thy flesh, and use them as means for the attaining of so excellent an end; wouldst thou have him whatever it cost thee? canst thou not be without him, what ever thou be without? then pass sentence for thy self, concluding thy condition to be happy.

This is the neatest way to find out thy condition, not stand wrangling with thy self, for thy former neglects, any further than for thy humiliation; and do not so much enquire what thou hast not formerly done, as what now thou art really willing to do.

Besides, this solemn, set examination, thou shalt find it very profitable to get and keep a sight of thy spiritual condition, to call thy self to an account every night before thou sleep, where thou hast been that day, what thou hast done, what company thou hast been in, what sin thou hast committed, what duty thou hast omitted, and mourn if thou hast fallen, and return thy hearty thanks to God, if thou hast walked carefully and circumspectly that day; this counsel a Noble Heathen did give, to call our selves to an account before we sleep.

Πῶς παρέβην; τί δὲ ἔρεξα, τί μοι δέον οὐκ ἐτελέσθη; *Pythag. Carm.*

3. *Direction.*

3. That thy assurance may be yet more compleat and full, and thy comfort arising from the same more enlarged; *Fall down at the Throne of Grace, and beg earnestly, and pray importunately for the witness of the Spirit of God.* For as it is the Spirit that worketh grace in us, so it is the Spirit that must discover the truth of that Grace to us, 1 *Cor.* 2. 12. *Now we have received not the Spirit of the World, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.* Rom. 8. 16. *The Spirit it self beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are the children of God.* But beware thou take not Satanical delusions for the spirits perswasion, or the conceit of thy own Brain, for the witness of the Spirit. The Spirit never witnesseth any thing to any man contrary to what is revealed in the Word, for he is a Spirit of Truth, and never speaks contradictions; therefore if any man thinketh that he hath the witness of the Spirit, testifying that he is a child of God, and yet is not holy, humble, penitent, he is deceived; but if thou hast the Graces of the Spirit, and the Spirit witnesseth so much unto thy Conscience, and with thy Conscience. 1. It inflameth thy heart with love to God and Christ, 2. It raiseth more hatred in thee to thy sin, 3. Thou findest a mighty strength and power in it, ingaging thy soul to walk humbly, holily with thy God. 4. A wonderful cogency in it to be zealous,

lous for God in suffering any thing for his sake, and doing and obeying any thing that he enjoyns,—thou hast encouragement to ask this of God, because it is according to his will, (q) *Job.* 14. 21. Lord, is it not according to thy will that I should be careful of my immortal soul? and make sure its eternal happiness and salvation? it is thy command I should do so, that I should examine my self whether I be in the faith, and whether Christ be formed in my heart. Lord, I have examined, but yet I cannot clearly see it. I see there is some grounds to hope it, but yet I cannot confidently assert it. Oh thou blessed Spirit of God, clear up mine understanding, and stir up and excite my Graces, that I may feel the actings of them in my soul, and so better discern them. Though this be arbitrary and not necessary, yet do to me as thou didst unto thy servant *David*, when he prayed that thou wouldst lift up upon him the light of thy countenance, thou puttest gladness into his heart. (r)

(q) Joh. 14. 13, 14.

(r) Psal. 4. 6, 7.

4. *Direction.*

4. *Press after the highest degrees of Grace, and be much in the exercise thereof*, if thou wouldest clearly discern thy spiritual condition. The weakness of thy Grace makes thee doubt of the truth of Grace. The Christian must be like the Crocodile, * that grows as long as it lives, and ceaseth to be, when it ceaseth to grow. The body of a man is continually growing, till he come to his perfect age, and then ceaseth to grow, for then, though he may wax fat, and broader, yet he riseth not higher, and his bones have no increase: So when we come to our full stature in Christ, to our perfect age in glory, we shall grow no more, because then we shall be perfect, but in our minority we must be always growing, and a growing person is easily discerned to be a living person. A Dwarf cannot see so far as a taller man, nor be seen so far: So a little Grace cannot be so easily perceived amongst a croud of sins and corruption.

* As some affirm.

When Grace at first is like *Elijahs* cloud, 1 *Kings* 18. 43, 44. Little like a mans hand, it was hardly discerned, but when it did increase, and the Heavens were black with Clouds, every eye could then perceive them. Assurance is usually vouchsafed to Christians of the largest size. Men put not up a great Mast or Sail in a little Boat, but in a larger Vessel, that is able to bear it.

So also by the strong actings and exercise of grace it is discerned. A man in his sleep, when he acts not reason, cannot judge himself to be a man. A man in a swoon, when he cannot be perceived to breath, standers by know not whether he be dead or alive, nor he himself.

Animi quies, motus virtutis est, the moving activity of vertue, is the setled rest of the mind.

Moral

Moral habits are acquired and strengthened by frequently repeated Acts, and more easily discerned. The fire lying raked under the ashes, is not so easily found, as when it being blown up, breaketh forth into a flame. He that hath strong love to God, will sooner feel it; and the more frequent it moveth, and is upon the wing after God, the sooner shalt thou know that thou lovest him. The being of a thing is proved by its operation. *Operari supponit esse.*

Direct. 5. *Be well acquainted and informed in the nature of the Covenant of Grace, and the conditions thereof.* Whatsoever are thy doubts, there is something in the Covenant of Grace, that would be ground of satisfaction to thee; is it thine own unworthiness? here rich and free Grace is laid open; is it thy long delay of coming into God, that now thou thinkest it is too late? the Gospel will tell thee, that Christ will not cast thee off, if now thou come unto him; is it thy ragged, torn, imperfect obedience? the covenant of Grace accepts of sincerity, though there be many infirmities; the intention of the heart for the work of the hand; the purpose for the performance, where the sincere soul cannot do so much as he doth really desire to do.

Direct. 6. *Prize the society of the people of God, that are acquainted with the workings of Gods spirit upon their hearts.* Be much in communion with the Saints. When they have been unfolding their doubts, they have been in some good measure resolved; this hath quickned their hearts when they have been dull, and blown up the sparks of love in their souls to God, that they have felt their hearts to burn within them (s) with love towards God.

(s) Luke 24. 32.

Direct. 7. *Keep a record of all the experiences thou hast had of Gods goodness to thee, and what thou hast formerly found* (t) *make it a means for the supporting of thy soul for the present, and the future.* Such a time thou canst remember thou wast upon thy knees, bemoaning thy self, loathing thy self, full of sorrow and complaints, and God took thee up in the arms of his love, and spake like a friend, words of peace and comfort to thy soul, and bid thee be of good chear, he was reconciled to thy soul; he filled thee full sorrow, and afterward filled thee full of joy; he cast thee down, and raised thee up; he broke thy heart, and bound it up; he came to thee, as to *Mary*, expostulating with thee; sinner, why weepest thou? what aileth thee? thou weepest for thy Saviour, and he was by thee, and shewed himself unto thee.

(t) Psalm 66. 16. Mal. 3. 16. Ps. 77. 10, 11.

So much for the means to obtain this certain knowledge of eternal life; but if by the use of these and the like direction, the soul cannot get this assurance; and though he search, and pray, and grieve,

becauſe he hath not the light of God's countenance ſhining upon him, followeth the means, and longs to know his eſtate, and all things he enjoyeth, are leſſened in his eſteem, becauſe he cannot ſee his intereſt in Chriſt, whom he doth moſt eſteem. To thee I will give theſe directions.

Counſel to thoſe, that by theſe directions, cannot yet obtain this aſſurance.

First, *Though thou canſt not ſay thy condition is good, yet do not ſay that thy condition is bad.* Though thou canſt not affirm thou haſt the faith of *Evidence*, yet do not peremptorily ſay, thou haſt not the faith of *Adherence*; though thou haſt not the witneſs of the ſpirit for thee, yet do not bear falſe witneſs againſt thy ſelf; canſt not thou ſay thou art ſure of Heaven, yet do not ſay there is no hope of Heaven; though thou canſt not own Heaven as thine, do not diſown it; if thou canſt not prove it, do not diſclaim it. It is ſtrange, yet ordinary, to ſee many doubting Chriſtians diſpute againſt themſelves, and reaſon againſt their own comfort; tell them of their longing after Chriſt, their weeping and mourning for him, they doubt it is not in truth: if you ſay to them, if you do not truly love him, then let him alone, and follow no more after him; why do you grieve for him becauſe you cannot find him, if you do not truly love him? they will reply, *Conſcience will* put a man on to do ſomething, when yet it may not be done out of love to God; if you ask, can you take up with any thing ſhort of Chriſt, though indeed they cannot, yet they will reply, The heart is deceitful, and they know not what they ſhould do. *Frame not Arguments againſt thy ſelf, when thou canſt not frame them for thy ſelf*; live by faith, when thou canſt not live by ſenſe and comfort.

Take heed here, of judging thy condition to be bad, by trying thy ſelf by rules, not ſo ſuitable to find out the being, and truth of grace, as the growth and increaſe of grace. And here,

1. Say not, thou haſt no Grace, becauſe thou haſt not ſo much as thou ſeeſt others to have; to take notice of the eminent degrees of Grace in others, to provoke our ſelves to labour after the ſame proportion, is good; but to argue for a nullity of Grace, becauſe thou ſtaſt not ſuch a quantity of Grace, as thou diſcerneſt in others, is not rational. Is there no water in the Brook, becauſe there is not ſo much as in the River? Is there not light in a candle, becauſe there is not ſo much as in the Sun? Wilt thou ſay thou art a Begger, becauſe thou art not ſo rich as thy Neighbours, that have a full eſtate? Or, that thou knoweſt nothing, becauſe thou knoweſt not ſo much as the greateſt Scholar? Obſerve *Peter* in this caſe, *John* 21. 17. he did not ſay when Chriſt asked him, *Loveſt thou me more than theſe*, I love thee *more* than *John*, or any of thy Diſciples love thee, *but*, *I love thee*; thou muſt love Chriſt more

more than thou loveſt any thing in the world beſides, or elſe thou doſt not ſincerely love him; but thou muſt not conclude, that, except thou loveſt him as much or more than others love him, that thou haſt no love at all unto him: Yet this is ordinary, I never was humbled ſo much as others have been; I cannot mourn as others do, enquire now after the *truth*, rather than after the *degrees*, and know thy humiliation is true. Firſt, when thou art broken for and from thy ſin: ſo much bitterneſs upon the breaſt, as weaneth the child from it, is ſufficient. Secondly, that makes thee ſee a neceſſity of Chriſt, and willing to cloſe ſincerely with him.

2. Say not, thou haſt no Grace, becauſe thou haſt not grace proportionable to thy deſires; but, rather hope thou haſt it, becauſe thou haſt ſuch enlarged deſires after it: is not he a froward, unthankful child, that ſaith his Father hath given him nothing, becauſe not ſo much as he deſireth?

3. Say not, Thou haſt no Grace, becauſe thou ſeeſt corruption in thee more than before; they were in thy heart before, though thou didſt not diſcern them; the houſe is full of filth, but while the ſhuts are up, it is not perceived, but take them down, and you ſee it plainly, not becauſe there is more filth, but, becauſe there is more light.

4. Not becauſe of the indiſpoſedneſs of thy heart to, and dulneſs of thy affections, ſometimes in the time of holy duties.

Secondly, *When thou canſt not get aſſurance, make as much improvement of the grounds, upon which thou mayeſt build* (u) *hopes of ſalvation.* The probable grounds thou haſt, thou wouldſt not part with for all the World; if thy heart is not full of joy through ſenſe of Gods love, yet thine eyes are full of tears, and thy ſoul of ſorrow, through the ſenſe of thy ſin, wouldſt thou change thy condition with any hypocrite whatſoever, with the richeſt man that hath no Grace? I would not have thee reſt ſatisfied with a probability, but yet bleſs God for a probability of ſalvation: Is it nothing, that one that hath deſerved hell moſt certainly, ſhould have a probability that he ſhould eſcape it; would not this be a little eaſe to the torments of the damned, if they had but a ſtrong probability, that they may be ſaved; *but no hope makes it heavy:* when thou art ſick, thou enquireſt of the Phyſitian, Sir, what do you think of me? ſhall I live? or ſhall I dye? if I reply, it is not certain, but there is good hopes, it is probable you will live, and do well; this is ſome ſupport unto thee in thy ſickneſs.

(u) Pſal. 33. 18. & Pſal. 148. 11.

Thirdly, *Diſcourſe with ſuch Chriſtians whom thou dareſt not judge to be ungodly, and yet findeſt them to be in the ſame condition with thy ſelf, having*

ving the ſame doubts, the ſame fears, complaining of the ſame ſin, and do not paſs a worſe judgement upon thy ſelf than thou dareſt upon them. This is a very uſeful way, either to convince, or ſupport; to conſider our caſe in a third perſon. Thus *Nathan* convinced *David*, 2 *Sam.* 12. 1. to the 15 *ver.* So the Prophet convinced *Ahab*, 1 *Kings* 20. 35. to the end of the Chapter. A man condemning another in the ſame caſe, becomes αὐτοκατάκριτος, ſelf-condemned. So a man approving of another in the ſame ſtate and condition, cloathed with the ſame circumſtances, as himſelf, is, to approve of himſelf; thou heareſt another ſay, he knows not what to think of his preſent and eternal ſtate; but yet thou ſeeſt, and he tells thee, he dares not willingly ſin; the deſire of his ſoul is to walk holily and humbly with his God, he dare not neglect a commanded duty; thou dareſt not ſay, this man hath no grace, it being as well with thee, ſay not worſe of thy ſelf.

Fourthly, *Forſake not duty, becauſe thou wanteſt comfort*; Thou hadſt better want joy, than neglect duty; for duty is more neceſſary than comfort, and in order to it, therefore muſt be minded more; to ſeek comfort, may be in love to thy ſelf; but to be conſtant in duty in the want of comfort, argues conſcientious obedience to the commands of thy God. Though thou are not taken up into the arms of Chriſt, yet lie at his feet; though he doth not take thee into his boſome, yet throng among the croud to touch the hem of his garment. He might deny thee comfort, and yet own thee for his child; but thou canſt not deny him duty, and yet own him for thy God: if he do not tell thee thou art his Son, yet do not thou ſay, thou wilt not be his (*w*) Servant. I beſeech thee, ſay not, I will hear no more, I will pray no more; Ordinances are in vain, and all endeavours will be in vain. Caſting off hope, clips the wings of ſerious, conſtant endeavours. Limit not God to thy time. *Joſeph* did not preſently diſcover himſelf unto his Brethren, but carried himſelf as a ſtranger to them. *Joſeph* knew that they were his Brethren, but they knew not that they were related to him: but they often coming to him, and making known their perplexed condition in the grief and trouble of their ſouls, with ſad complaints and moans; he could no longer refrain, his heart was full, his bowels did yearn, and the fire of love did ſo flame forth, that made his tears preſently boyl over. I am *Joſeph* your Brother, I will ſhew you kindneſs, be not troubled, *Gen.* 45. 1. and the following verſes. While thou followeſt God with thy complaints, and preſſeſt hard after Chriſt; he will at length ſhew, and make known himſelf unto thee. O thou weeping ſinner, I am Jeſus thy Brother, I am thy Redeemer, I will be thy Saviour,

(*w*) Luke 15. 19.

Saviour, though thou hast dealt unkindly with me, yet I will receive thee with the sweet embracements of my everlasting love. Read *Psal.* 85.8. *Hos.* 6.1, 2, 3. *Isa.* 54. 7, 8.

Fifthly, *Alwaies be more observant of the purpose and disposition of thy heart, the inclination of thy will, the general scope of thy life, than the passionate sense of joy and comfort.* There is but little constancy in these joys, like the tide, they ebbe and flow. Like a Land-floud, might overflow for a while, but a little after be dried up; joys are the *sweet-meats* of the soul, but are not for its constant fare and diet. For a spiritual banquet, not for a standing-dish. Thus it was with *David.* And the experience of Christians proves it.

Sixthly, *When thou canst not experience the sweetness of the Promise yet then firmly believe the verity of the Promise.* The Truth of the Promise doth not depend upon our sense and feeling of it, especially when we would; there might be *evidentia credibilitatis*, when there is not *evidentia rei*, sufficient reason to believe, because it is a promise made by God, when thou dost not as yet see the performance of it. Though thou hast not tasted honey, yet thou wilt believe it to be sweet, if told by one that hath eaten thereof.

Seventhly, *Carry thy self really towards thy sin, as thou dost conceive, through mistake, God doth towards thee.* Thou sayest, God doth not love thee, be sure thou dost not love thy sin; thou sayest, he hath cast thee off, be sure thou cast off thy sin; smile as *little* upon thy sin, as in thy *greatest darkness* of discomfort, thou sayest God doth upon thee. Lighten the ship by casting thy sins over-board, and thou shalt come safe to shoar. This Eclipse may be by the interposition of some sin betwixt thee, and the light of God's countenance.

Eightly, *Diligently observe what grace is of the greatest growth in thy soul, and make the best improvement of that for thy support.* The body natural doth grow in all the parts of it, but not equally, as to all dimensions; the finger grows not to the magnitude of the wrist or arm; In mixt bodies there are all the elements, but one is predominant. Amongst the many branches of a tree, one might out-top all the rest. In a ring of Bells, all sound, but the great Bell is heard above them all. In the new Creature there are all Graces *radically* and *seminally*, but yet one might be more eminent than the rest. In some, Faith (*x*) in some, love to God (*y*) in some, sorrow for sin (*z*) as every sin is *radically* in every wicked man, yet some sin is grown to a greater height, and, like *Saul*, is taller than the rest; in one, covetousness; in another, passion; in another, pride.

x Mat. 15. 28.
y Luk. 7. 44. 47.
z 2 Cor. 2. 7. 2 Chro. 33. 12.

Moral vertues are connexed *communi vinculo*, with a common bond, yet

yet they may be in ſeveral degrees: Some have them *in gradu continentiæ*, that, though the diſorders and perturbations of the ſoul are very urgent and preſſing, yet a man is able to reſiſt, and to ſuppreſſe them. Some *in gradu temperantiæ*, when the paſſions are more ſedate and calm; ſome *in gradu heroico*, when they are ſo ſubdued and reſtrained, that they are ſubject to the government and rule of Right Reaſon, the Guide and Leader of the ſoul. Now, that grace that is moſt eminent, is eaſily diſcerned. Make uſe of that.

Ninthly, *Bleer not thine eyes, by alwaies poring upon thy ſin, and wants, that are the reaſon of thy doubts and fears; but ſtudy alſo the Righteouſneſs and fulneſs of Chriſt, for the ſuppors of hope and confidence.* Know, that if thou hadſt never ſo little ſin, (*a*) yet thou haſt need of a Saviour; and if thou haſt never ſo much, he is willing and ſufficient (*b*); if thou hadſt never ſo much ſorrow, and inherent grace, thou muſt be juſtified by the merits of Chriſt alone (*c*); and if thou haſt but ſo much as is true and ſincere, thou art juſtified, and ſhalt be (*d*) ſaved. Set thy Faith on work therefore, to lay hold upon Chriſt, and Faith will ſuck ſtrength from Chriſt, as the child doth cleave to the Mother by the navel, and receive nouriſhment from her; a twig that is ſhaken by every wind, yet tied to the body of a tree, it ſtandeth faſt; eye thy ſin to caſt thee down, and Chriſt's Righteouſneſs to raiſe thee up.

a Gal. 3. 10.
b Iſa. 1. 18.
c Job 9. 21. 1 Cor. 4. 4. Phil. 3. 8, 9.
d Mat. 12. 20.

Tenthly, *Be more in practice than in diſputes, and wherein thou wouldſt inform thy judgement, proceed in a right method.* Many weak Chriſtians cannot ſee the complexions of their faces, becauſe they are alwaies looking into troubled waters, ſearching into needleſs diſputes and queſtions, notional knowledge in the Scripture will never cure thy diſtemper, no more than bare reading of *Galen*, or the works of ſome Phyſitian will recover a man from a fit of ſickneſs.

And where thou wouldſt be informed, proceed in a right method, queſtion not thy election firſt, but thy true converſion. *God hath reprobated me, all will be in vain*; but thou muſt prove thy election by thy converſion, as the cauſe is diſcovered by the effect. *We muſt begin in this where God doth end, & end where God doth begin.* As on a Ladder, he that is above, if he would come down to you, muſt firſt uſe the top-rounds, but if you would go up to him, you muſt firſt uſe the bottom-rounds, and aſcend ſtep by ſtep. Election is the uppermoſt round, Sanctification is at the bottom; and by our ſanctification we muſt climb up to ſee our names written in the Book of Life. In building, men proceed *methodo ſynthetica*; in pulling down, *methodo analytica*. If you would take a Watch to pieces, you muſt begin where the Watch-maker made an end.

end. The Carpenter, when he builds, first laies the foundation, and finishes the roof last; when he pulls down, he takes off the roof, and so to the foundation. God did first chuse, and then convert us; but we first know our conversion, and thereby our election.

Motives to get Assurance.

In the close take these Motives drawn from the utility of this Assurance, to quicken thee further to labour after it. This Assurance will be, 1. Comfortable to thy self. 2. Profitable to others.

It will fill thee with comfort, 1. Under all God's Providences. 2. Under all God's Ordinances.

First, That is a desirable frame of spirit, that doth fit us to carry our selves under the various dispensations of divine providence (wherewith the people of God are exercised) as most becomes the Gospel of Christ, and the profession we make. Assurance helps us in this; For,

1. *Assurance sweetens every mercy*, it is the Sugar in our Wine. He knows every mercy is given in mercy, and not in wrath: he knows it is not his portion; he hath much here, but he is sure he shall have more hereafter; but the want of this imbitters all outward injoyments to the doubting Christian who saith, what are the riches of the world to me, when I doubt whether the graces of the spirit are infused into me? what is gold without God's love? and what is plenty without hope of Heaven?

2. *Assurance will lighten every burden*; with this he can bear the burden of adversity (as *Sampson* did the gates of *Gaza* upon his back, *Judg.* 16. 3.) without sinking under it.

1. *The assured Believer knows he is rich in the midst of Poverty*, Col. 2. 2. Though I cannot say riches are mine, yet I can say Christ is mine, and that is more. Though I cannot say silver and gold is mine, yet I can say grace and glory is mine, and that is better. This believer can look up towards Heaven, and say, yonder is the place, the Palace, the Kingdom I have a title to, above yonder Heavens must I for ever dwell; above yonder Sun is a mansion for *me*; oh I long to be there, where I know I shall for ever be. My heart is filled with joy while I think on it; oh what joy shall enter into me, when I shall enter into that joyful, blessed place; though now I walk in rags, I shall shortly be cloathed with white and glorious Robes. Now a cottage is my house, but a stately building is prepared for me, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1. *Joh.* 14. 2, 3.

2. *The assured believer rejoyceth in the sharpest sufferings for the Gospels sake* *. He can despise and scorn all the scornings, threatnings, and reproaches of the ungodly world; for, though he seeth he is hated by men, yet he knoweth he is beloved by God.

* Heb. 10. 34. Acts 5. 40, 41. & 16. 23, 24, 25. Compare Gal. 2. 20. with Acts 20. 23, 24. & 21. 13.

3. *Assurance*

3. *Aſſurance is the beſt cordial in time of ſickneſs, and a Sovereign remedy againſt the fears of death.* But it is ſad to be a doubting Chriſtian, when thou art a dying Chriſtian.

Secondly, The aſſured believer may with comfort approach to God in all his Ordinances. 1. He can go to the Throne of Grace with humble boldneſs, crying *Abba* Father. 2. When he reads, or hears the Word of God, every part is welcome to his ſoul. When the Promiſes are opened, he can ſay, theſe belong to me; when threatnings are denounced, he can rejoyce, becauſe he is delivered from the miſery threatned; when commands are urged, by aſſurance, they are much facilitated; this is my Fathers command, I will do it; my Fathers will, I will obey it. 3. He can approach with joy to the Lord's Supper, and ſit there with great delight. He ſees the wounds, the ſufferings, the ſorrows of Chriſt, all this was for me.

Secondly, This Aſſurance will make thee profitable unto others.

1. To the wicked. 2. To the godly.

1. To the wicked. By this the wicked ſhall be convinced, that Religion is a reality, that Ordinances are not empty things, when they muſt acknowledge ſurely theſe men meet with ſomething from God in duty, which we are ſtrangers to, that maketh them thus chearful in all conditions.

2. By this they ſhall be convinced that *that* is falſe they have conceived of ſerioufneſs in Religion, that if they cloſe with Chriſt, they ſhall never have a delightful, pleaſant life more. Drooping, diſconſolate, mourning Chriſtians, ſtrengthen this error in wicked men too much.

2. It will make thee profitable to the godly. 1. To the weak. 2. To the ſtrong.

Firſt, Thou wilt be profitable to the weak, by communicating thy experiences to them for their comfort and ſupport, 2 *Cor.* 1. 4.

Secondly, Thou ſhalt be profitable to the ſtrong, that have the ſame aſſurance with thy ſelf. When two ſuch meet together, oh how ſweet is their diſcourſe of the joyes of Heaven, and of the comforts of the Spirit, and the delights of the life of a Chriſtian.

Theſe advantages, amongſt many others that I might have named, hath the believer that is aſſured of his ſpiritual-ſafe condition, that a believer that yet knoweth it not, doth not ſo fully enjoy. I ſhall conclude all with that exhortation of the Apoſtle, 2 *Pet.* 1. 10, 11. *Wherefore the rather, Brethren, give diligence to make your Calling and Election ſure:— for ſo an entrance ſhall be miniſtred unto you abundantly, into the everlaſting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.*

What

VVhat difference is there between the Conflict in Natural and Spiritual Persons?

Rom. 7. 23.

But I see another Law in my members warring against the Law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the Law of sin which is in my members.

THE Apostle having shewed in the former Chapter, that Justified Persons are not under the Law, prosecutes and amplifies that choice Priviledge in this seventh Chapter, which hath four parts.

Parts of the Chapter.

1. An Allegory, which shews there is no matching with Christ, till we be divorced from the Law, *Vers.* 1. — 6. *Moses* may be a good friend, but to fallen man he is ever an ill Husband, a bloudy Husband, as he was to *Zipporah*, *Exod.* 4. 25.

2. A complaint, partly of the Law, as an occasion of sins malignity, *ver.* 8, 9, 10. and partly of his own estate. 1. Before Conversion (as either secure, or desperate, *ver.* 9, 10, 11.) Secondly, after Conversion (as troublesome and vexatious, *vers.* 14. — 24.)

3. An Apologie, 1. For the Law as ſpiritual, holy, juſt, and good, *v.* 12, 14, 16. Secondly, For himſelf as under a force, *&c. v.* 15, 17, 20, 22, 25. The beſt Goſpel Apology againſt ſin, is (under Chriſt) afore or after diſcent, 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. This grace will allow for a good clearing of our ſelves.

4. A Gratulation, *v.* 25. No man, eſpecially, no godly man can, under the Goſpel, want matter of thanks, be his condition never ſo ſad, ſince the former is not altogether hopeleſs, and the later hath at preſent a part and intereſt in Chriſt.

Coherence. My Text falls under the ſecond head. The Apoſtle's condition was bad before Converſion, ſad after Converſion, truly militant, and no relcaſe from this warfare, *Eccleſ.* 8. 8. Chriſt indured the contradiction of ſinners, *Heb.* 12. 3. Chriſtians, the contradiction both of ſin and ſinners, and that continually. May they not well complain? as *Pſal.* 120. 5, 6, 7. and *Gen.* 25. 22.

Diviſion of the Text. In the words, note 1. An Act of Obſervation; Godly men are great obſervers, eſpecially of themſelves, *ver.* 18. *I know*, *v.* 21. *I find*, and in the Text, *I ſee*.

2. The matter obſerved (a Combate or Conflict) In which, note 1. The Combatants or Champions, the Law of the mind, and the Law of the members. The *form* of a Being, Naturaliſts call, a *Law*, *Bac. de forma Calidi Aphor.* 7. becauſe *Forms* like *Laws*, and *Laws* like *Forms*, do ordinate and conſtitute Natural and Politick Bodies in their being, diſtinctions and operations. *Vatablus* calls it, *alium vim*, *Law*, as forms being principles of action. *Grotius* diſtinguiſheth of a fourfold *Law*. 1. *Lex Dei*, recorded in Scripture. 2. *Lex Mentis*, the Judgement between things honeſt and diſhoneſt. 3. *Lex Membrorum*, the carnal or ſenſual Appetite. 4. *Lex Peccati*, the Cuſtome of ſinning; to compleat which heads, we muſt (with the leave of that Learned Author) add two other diſtinctions, namely, 1. The Law of Original Sin propagated by Generation, which is ſtrengthened by cuſtome in evil, and together with our ſenſual appetite depraved, makes up the Law of ſin. Secondly, The Law of ſanctifying Grace infuſed in Regeneration, which compleats the Law of the mind.

2. The equality of this fight in a reciprocal oppoſition, ſin indwelling, fighting againſt Grace indwelling, and *contra* Arab. *Caſtramentem*, there being a pitch'd Battel between Grace and Corruption; in which, ſome Graces and Corruptions bear the office of Commanders, others, of Common-ſouldiers: this is noted in the Prepoſition ἀντι, compare *Heb.* 12. 4.

3. The

3. The disparity of the fight managed by way of rebellion on the part of Sin, by way of Loyaltie and Authority on the part of Grace: whence *Beza* and *Piscator* render it *rebellantem.*

4. The dubiousnes of the fight, both parties often fighting as it were *equo Marte*; sometimes one, sometimes the other seeming to get the better, as in the battel between *Israel* and *Amalek*, *Exod.* 17. 11.

5. The sad event too often on the better side which is led *Captive*; in which term yet there is a mixture of comfort; Sin, when in Triumph acting as a Tyrant, not as a lawful Soveraign: The Law of the mind may be over-born by, but never indents with the Law of the members; as a person inslaved by force, but not by contract; or as School-boys, in a mis-rule, may shut their Master for a while out of doors; but at last he gets in, and they pay dearly for that affront. Withal, note in the Text, a mixture of civil and military terms to illustrate the spiritual conflict; there being a Law-suit, as well as a pitch'd Battel, between Grace and Corruption.

The Text is limited, by the Apostle, to the Regenerate; yet may in a good and true sense be extended to the unregenerate also, in whom there is a Law of the mind; namely, the Law of *Reason*, though not of *Regeneration.* Yea, *Porphyrius*, lib. 1. περὶ ἀποχῆς uses the Apostle's phrase, calling it τὸν νόμον τοῦ νοὸς. Taking therefore the Law of the mind, and the Law of the members in a large sense, may not every one take up this complaint of the Apostle? Thence note, The scope of the Text.

In every man, especially in the *Regenerate*, there is a Conflict between the Law of the *Mind*, and the Law of the *Members.* Doctr.

That it is so, appears by a threefold Evidence. The ὅτι.

1. By the testimony of Nature speaking in Heathen. Thus *Medea*; *Video meliora, proboque deteriora sequor.* So *Simplicius ad Epictetum*, Ἄλογος ὄρεξις τὸν λόγον κινήσασα (τοῦτ' ἐστιν ἡμᾶς τὰς κατ' αὐτὸν ὁρμὰς) καὶ ἀκωλύτως λαβοῦσα. The irrational appetite displaces reason, *&c.* and leads it captive.

2. By testimony of Scripture, and that 1. As to the Godly, *Gal.* 5. 17. *The flesh lusteth against the Spirit*, &c. 2. As to the unregenerate, instance in *Herod*, who was troubled by this conflict between Lust and Conscience, *Mark* 6. 26. Yea, in the very Heathen, *Rom.* 2. 14, 15. who, by not hearkening to Conscience opposing sin in them, felt Conscience accusing them for sin.

3. By every mans experience. Who finds not every day within himself, a conteft of contrary motions and inclinations? Are we not all in this point *Rebeccahs*, big, though not with *Twins*, yet with an *Esau*

and a *Jacob*, two contrary Nations ſtrugling each with other? *Gen.* 25. *ver.* 22, 23. Oh that we had all her wiſdome and ſucceſs.

The διότι, why its ſo, will appear in the Explication and reſolution of the ſpecial Caſe of Conſcience aſſigned: which therefore here I paſs.

Prem ſals. Before I propound the Caſe, let me premiſe ſome particulars preparatory, as a Key of Explication.

1. As the great, ſo the little world (man) is made up of contraries: The outward man of contrary Elements, humours, health and ſickneſs; the inward man, of contrary Principles; reaſon and paſſion, grace and corruption, conſcience and ſenſe.

2. Man is both an Actor in, and a Theatre of the greateſt action and nobleſt conflict in the world, though uſually inviſible, and therefore not ſo much obſerved. *Prov.* 16. 32. He that conquers himſelf, is a nobler *Heroe* than *Alexander*, who conquered a great part of the World.

3. In the ſtate of Innocency there was no conflict, in the ſtate of Glory there will be no conflict, there being no corruption to combate with Grace. In a ſtate of Minority (as infants and fools) there is no conflict till reaſon begin to dawn, and with it conſcience to actuate common principles againſt the motions of innate corruption. In a ſtate of corruption there is no ſpiritual conflict, becauſe there is no renewing grace to combate with corruption, that ſtrong man that keeps all in peace till a ſtronger than he comes, *Luke* 11. 21, 22.

4. The natural conflict is in every godly man, the ſpiritual conflict is in no wicked or natural man. This I note, to allay the fears of drooping Saints, who finding a conflict between conſcience and corruption, conclude they are in the ſtate of Nature, and ſearch not for the conflict between Grace and Corruption. This is, as if a man ſhould conclude he is a Beaſt, becauſe he hath ſenſe like a Beaſt, not conſidering that he hath reaſon ſuper-added, which a Beaſt is not capable of.

5. There is a vaſt difference between the natural and the ſpiritual conflict. This will appear in the reſolution of the caſe.

6. The miſtake about theſe two conflicts. 1. Undoes natural men, who feeling a combate in themſelves, fondly apprehend it to be the fight between the fleſh and the ſpirit, and thereupon reſt ſecure in a natural eſtate. 2. It troubles regenerate perſons, and that in reference both to duty and comfort, making them drive heavily, becauſe they doubt whether they be *Iſraelites* or *Ægyptians*.

7. As

7. As the great wisdome of God lies in governing the great world made up of contraries; so the great wisdome of a godly man lies in governing the little-world made up of like contraries.

8. This government lies principally in discerning these conflicting contraries, and improving their contrariety for the advantage of the outward and inward man. He is the wisest Physitian who can govern the body made up of contraries; and he is the wisest Christian who can rule his soul in the midst of contraries; In this Government Christ is Principal, *Psalm.* 110. 2. A Saint Instrumental, *Hos.* 11. 12.

9. This singular wisdom is attainable in the use of ordinary means, and that by the meanest who have grace to follow Christ's conduct: yet not by the power of free-will, or humane industry, but by the bounty of free and special Grace, 2 *Tim.* 3.15. *Jam.* 1.5. *Rom.* 9.16.

10. It cannot be expected that any unregenerate person should understand to purpose the difference between these two conflicts; because he hath no experience of this double State, and double Principle. No wonder then, if such say of me as the *Jews* did of the Prophet, *Ezek.* 20. 49. *Doth he not speak Parables?* However, for the sake of the Unregenerate, to convince them; and for the sake of the Regenerate, to comfort them; I shall endeavour (plowing with Christ's Heifer) to find out this great Riddle. And so I come to the Case, and a case of the highest concernment.

Wherein doth the Natural and Spiritual conflict differ? or, what difference is there between the conflict in the Natural and Spiritual man? *Quest.*

They differ principally in seven particulars, and *Answ.*

I. In the ground or cause of the fight, which in the Unregenerate is,

1. Natural Principles, or the reliques of Gods Image in the Understanding: The Notion of a Deity, and of loving my neighbour as my self, *&c.* are Principles cannot be rased out of any mans heart, be he never so professt an Atheist, nor can these principles lye alwaies idle, but will more or less be in action against corrupt inclinations.

2. Acquired Principles from common illumination, moral and religious education and custome. This light discovers more of sins obliquity and danger, thereby laying on a stronger bridle of restraint through fear, shame, *&c.* and adding spurs to the exercise of many parts of piety.

3. The natural temper of the body which indispose to some special sins, as well as to some special graces. As all souls, so original corruption

corruption in them may be equal, yet not act *equally*, because of the indispositednesse of bodily Organs. Thus some naturally are more chaste, sober, and meek than others, and hence their temper advances the combate against the lusts that oppose the fore-mentioned virtues.

4. The contrariety of one lust to another. Grace is uniform, and each virtue linked together in a perfect subordination: but sin is divided, and opposite to it self as well as to Grace. Thus Ambition saies, *Spend*; Covetousnes saies, *Spare*; Revenge incites to murder, Self-love restrains for fear of an halter. Here now is a combate, but only between flesh and flesh, between flesh more refined, and flesh more corrupted. The best of these may be called a counter-motion (as in dust and clouds agitated by contrary winds) but not properly a conflict or fight; because they proceed not from a true vital principle, there being in a natural man, no principle of Spiritual Life.

On the other hand; In the Regenerate, the combate ariseth from the Antipathy of two contrary Natures perfectly hating each other, *Gal.* 5. 17. Of all affections (as one notes well) Love and hatred are first, and most uncompoundable. A godly man hates sin as God hates it, not so much for its danger, as for its loathsomness; as some creatures hate filth, so that they will rather dye than defile themselves. One Woolf may snarl at another, but the quarrel is not laid in their Natures as it is in the Woolf and Lamb, which therefore cannot be reconciled. God in Paradise first sounded the Trumpet to this Alarm, *Gen.* 3. 15. proclaiming an eternal War between this seed of the Woman, and of the Serpent. As in persons, so much more in principles, there is a mutual abomination. Compare *Psalm* 139. 22. *Prov.* 29. 29. *Psal.* 97. 10. and 119. 128. and *Rom.* 8. 7. Enemies may, but Enmity can never be reconciled.

II. They differ in the object or matter of conflict; which in a natural man is, 1. Grosser evils that startle the Conscience. 2. Infamous evils that are attended with worldly fear or shame, or 3. Some particular evils that cross temper, education, or customes, *&c.*

But in spiritual persons, the matter of conflict is, 1. Little sins as well as great. 2. Secret sins as well as open. 3. The first risings as well as the gross acts. 4. Sins which promise worldly safety, credit, profit, contentment, as well as those sins that threaten the contrary. 5. In a word, all moral evil, hatred and antipathy being of the whole kind, *Psal.* 119. 128. especially of those evils which most indanger the New-man, *Psal.* 18. 23. and such as are beloved sins, *Mat.* 18. *ver.* 8, 9.

III. They

III. They differ in the subject of the conflict. In natural men, the fight is in several faculties, reason fighting against sense and passion, or the dictate of conscience against the corrupt inclination of the will; whence the fight is more at a distance by missile Arms and velitation. But in the regenerate man, the fight is more close in the same faculty, the wisdome of flesh and spirit counter-acting in the same understanding, the lustings of the flesh and spirit in the same will: whence the fight is as it were *inter Triarios* Grace and Corruption immediately; which at first haply was managed by the *Hastati* and *Scutati*, Reason and Interest. The former is like the fight of the Souldiers of Fortune, more lazy, and by way of Siege; the later more keen and vigorous by way of Assault an Onslait; like that of *Scanderbeg*, who fought with his Enemies breast to breast in a Box or Grate.

IV. They differ in the Instruments or weapons wherewith they combate. The natural mans weapons are (like himself) carnal; to wit, natural or moral reason, worldly fears or hopes, and sometimes spiritual fears or hopes, but carnalized, namely, slavish fear, and mercenary hopes. But the Regenerate mans weapons are Spiritual, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. to wit, gracious Interest, and all the Spiritual Armour, *Ephes.* 6. *ver* 11. —— 18. especially the Shield of Faith, and the Sword of the Spirit.

V. They differ in the manner of the fight. The natural mans combate is more mercenary; admits of more Parleys, cessations, correspondencies, as 1 *Sam.* 15. 9. *Saul's* fight with *Amaleck*. But the spiritual man (as such) fights it out to the last, and will give no Quarter. The former is like the strife between Wind and Tide, which often come about, and are both of one side; the later is like the Dam and the Tide, that strive till one be born down: or like Stream and Tide meeting and conflicting till one hath overborn the other.

VI. They differ in the extent of the conflict, in relation to its subject and duration. The extent of the Subject is double. 1. As to the Faculties. 2. As to the Acts. As to the Faculties; The seat of War in the Regenerate, is every faculty, flesh and spirit being ever mixed (as light and darkness in every point of Air in the twilight) 1 *Thes.* 5. 23. Grace and Corruption leaven the whole man: So that in the Regenerate, there is at the same time both a Civil and a Forreign War, that in the same faculty, this in one faculty against another.

Contrariwise, in the Unregenerate there is usually nothing but a forreign War between several faculties, there being nothing of spiritual good in their wills and affections, to set the same faculty against it self.

2. It

2. It extends also to every act of piety and charity, (especially if more spiritual) *Rom.* 7. 21. For which, the natural man hath no conflict, (but against them) unless it be to stop the mouth of conscience inlightned, *&c.* Nor indeed doth he know experimentally what spiritual acts of Piety are. But the regenerate find it by constant experience, Faith and Unbelief, Humility and Pride, ever opposing and counter-working each other: whence he is forced to cut his way through his Enemies, and to dispute it step by step. Others may seek, but he strives, *Luke* 13. 24. and takes the Kingdom of Heaven by an holy violence, *Mat.* 11. 12. in spight of spiritual enemies that waylay him within and without.

2. As to the extent of duration of the War, which being in the Regenerate irreconcilable, must needs be interminable; like the War between the *Romans* and *Carthaginians* that was intayl'd to Posterity: or as fire and water will fight for ever, if together for ever. In the natural man (contrariwise) the quarrel is soon took up, as between the *Romans* and other Nations; there being not that antipathy between Reason and Corruption, as there is between Grace and Corruption.

VII. They differ in the concomitants and consequents of the *fight*. And 1. The fight in natural men may stand with the constant practice of, and living in sin, against the light of Conscience. Godly men sin more with knowledge, but wicked men more against knowledge. He that is born of God doth not commit sin, that is, make a trade of living and lying in known sin, 1 *Joh.* 3. 9.

2. The fight in the Unregenerate hinders not the perfection and consummation of sin in the antecedent deliberation, and purpose, in the present delight and complacency, and the following pertinacy and impenitency. Instance in *Saul*, *Herod*, *Judas*, and others. But the Spirit, by its conflict, breaks the power of sin in all these in the Regenerate, that they can neither do good as they would, nor sin as they otherwise would, *Gal.* 5. 17.

3. The fight in natural men seeks only the repression, not the suppression of sin, to lop the superfluous branches, not stub up the root; to charm the Serpent, not to break its head. But the spiritual fight seeks the full mortification and abolition of sin, *Rom.* 6. 6. (hatred seeks the destruction of its Enemy, 1 *Sam.* 24. 19. and 1 *Joh.* 3. 15.) and the compleat perfection of Grace, though not attainable in this life, *Phil.* 3. *ver.* 10. — 14. This for the first branch of Wisdome, which teaches to discern between the natural and the spiritual Conflict.

The

The second Branch of Heavenly Wisdome, lyes in improving these Spiritual Contrarieties, by siding with the spirit against the flesh. Application.

1. This is done. 1. By watching all the forces, designs and motions of the Enemy. We have in us Legions of these Devils, the meanest of them too strong and too subtil for us, *Heb.* 3. 13. true *Gibeonites*, that can easily cheat us with their mouldy bread, and clouted Garments; Sons of *Anak*, all of one confederacy, and sworn Enemies of our salvation; had we not need have our eyes in our heads, and set watchfulness upon the forlorn hope? 1 *Cor.* 16. 13.

2. By making head early against the Enemy. *Principiis obsta*, &c. nip sin in the bud, crush this Cockatrice in the shell, strangle this hellish-Brat in the birth; take heed of the first appearances of evil, take its first Allarms; slight not the smallest sin or occasion of sinning. How much mischief is done by a little wound, a little Thief, a small Spark? *Jam.* 3. 5. and 2 *Sam.* 11. 2.

3. Oppose especially thy Master-Lust. Fight (in comparison) neither against small nor great, but against the King of these Hellish Regiments, 1 *Kings* 22. 31. Be sure to pull out that right eye. This is the Skirt Satan laies hold of, in wrastling with thee, to thy hazard, and his no small advantage; The *Goliah*, and *Holofernes*, who being once slain, the *Philistims* and *Assyrians* will soon be routed. Throw the head of this *Sheba* over the wall, and the enemy will retreat shamefully.

4. Never enter the field without thy Second: Fight under the Shield, as well as under the Banner of thy General. In other fights the General flies to the Battel upon the wings of his Army, but here the Army flies upon the wings of their General. This is done by Faith and Prayer. Thus *David* conquered *Goliah*, 1 *Sam.* 17. 45. and the *Philistims*, 2 *Sam.* 5. 19, 23. Fight always upon thy knees; Let *Moses* be praying while *Joshua* is fighting, *Exod.* 17. 11: May not Christ take it ill if thou carry thy self as if thou meanest to steal a victory before he know of it?

5. Put on, keep on, stand in, and exercise thy Spiritual Arms, *Ephes.* 6. *v.* 10.—18. That only is Armour of Proof: never any girds it on but may boast before the Victory. Allude to 1 *Kings* 20. 11. never any fought prosperously without it: It's our metal as well as our weapon: Neither Earth, nor Hell can stand against this Artilery of Heaven. Let not Satan find thee disarmed, lest he leave thee dispoyled. There is no fighting with carnal weapons against a spiritual

Enemy. You may as well beat the Devil with a ſword or ſpear, as conquer ſin by the power of Free-will, or with moral and worldly Arguments. They are but paper bullets and paper walls, the ſcorn, not the Terrour of Hell, though uſeful in ſome caſes. Remember withal, there are no Arms for thy Back-parts.

6. With ſome Luſts fight like the *Parthians*, flying, 1 *Cor.* 6. 18. and 2 *Tim.* 2. 22. This is but an honourable retreat, and warlike ſtratagem, *Joſh.* 8. 15. *Judg.* 20. 32. Youthful Luſts are like the *Baſiliſk*, or like a burning-glaſs in the Sun, that may not be looked on, 2 *Sam.* 11. 2. with other Luſts fight like the *Romans*, charging home.

7. Entertain no Parley with thy Enemy. This coſt all mankind dear at firſt *Gen.* 3. *ver.* 1.—4. It's diſloyal, looks like a confederacy, and is very dangerous. Come not into *Jaels* tent, ſleep not in *Dalilahs* lap, talk not with *Joab* leſt he ſmite thee under the fifth Rib. Sin and Satan are too cunning Sophiſters for us to diſpute withal. He in a manner gives up his Cauſe, that will plead it with the Devil. The beſt Anſwer to Satans Suit, is, a round and churliſh denyal, *Zach.* 3. 2. *Mat.* 4. 10. *Jude ver.* 9. Parleying is a kind of faint denial, and draws on this impudent Suiter.

8. Take advantage by every thing that befalls thee in this Spiritual Warfare. Eye thy reſerves: The Captain of thy Salvation is both thy Vanguard and thy Rereward, and will be thy Reward: Thou gaineſt thy Husband, as *David* did his Wife, by conquering theſe *Philiſtims*: and, while thou art fighting for him, he is weaving thy Crown: 2 *Tim.* 4. 7, 8. Eye thy fellow-ſouldiers, thoſe Worthies of the Heavenly *David*, that are both Militant and Triumphant, *Heb.* 12. 1. Example is very forcible. Yea, take advantage by thy very Foyls, to be more humble, charitable, dependent, watchful and couragious. Let not the Enemy gain the field, after Conqueſt, by a back-blow of Pride. This *Antiochus* gains (often) more by flattery than by force, *Dan.* 11. 21, 22. It's honourable for Chriſt to ſay, *well done*, &c. but dangerous for Satan to ſay, *well done*; and ſafe for thee to ſay, *poorly done*, when thou haſt done thy beſt. Deſpiſe thy ſelf when others admire thee; and be aſſured, that ſelf-admiration is the moſt dangerous Devil in the World. Eſpecially, improve Advantages prudently, when thou haſt thy Enemy on the hip, yea, on the ground: fall with all thy weight upon him, give him no Quarter, leſt thou meet with the doom of *Ahab*, 1 *Kings* 20. 42. and of the *Iſraelites*, *Numb.* 33. 55, 56. Here, as one notes well,

Learn

Learn Wisdom of the Serpents-Brood, who never thought they had Christ sure enough, though they had him in the Grave, *Mat.* 27. 64. Remember; it's thy highest Wisdom, first to discern, next to improve the Spiritual Contrarieties that act in thy own bosome. He is the wisest man that knows himself, and he the strongest man that conquers himself. This alone is the true *Israelite*, who by conquering himself, doth (in a pious sense) overcome both Heaven, Earth, and Hell, *Gen.* 32. 28.

VVhat Faith is that, which except we have in Prayer, we muſt not think to obtain any thing of God?

James 1. 6.

But let him ask in Faith.——

FOr the Connexion of theſe words with the former, ſince they will not give much light to the Queſtion I am to handle, and the time will hardly permit things more neceſſary to be ſpoken, I ſhall wholly wave or very briefly ſpeak to.

The Subject I am to ſpeak to, is to ſhew what is meant here by asking *in Faith*, or what Faith that is, which who ſo hath not, *muſt not*, or hath no reaſon to expect to receive any thing from God. God may beſtow his mercies where and on whom he pleaſeth; but he is no way engaged by promiſe to beſtow any mercy on ſuch an one that asketh not in Faith. It is not ſaid, that ſuch an one ſhould expect any great matters from God, but not any thing at all, the leaſt mercy is greater, then he hath any reaſon to think he ſhall receive, not only he ſhall not receive Wiſdom, ſpoken of *ver.* 5. but not any thing. Wiſdom he may get as *Achitophel* did, and many other things without praying in Faith, or praying at all, but for Divine Wiſdom or for any bleſſing from God, he may think what he will, but if the Apoſtle may be thought worthy to adviſe him, he would not have him think to receive any thing, except he ask, and ask in Faith. Therefore it much concerns us to know what is meant by asking in Faith, ſince the want of it makes our Prayers of none effect; if we pray without it, we may pray, but you cannot juſtly expect any return of your Prayers, except it be as of an arrow ſhot

ſhot up to Heaven upon your own head to your wounding. Of this Queſtion I ſhall ſpeak very plainly, as the Lord ſhall enable me in the evidence and demonſtration of the Spirit, Comparing Spiritual things with Spiritual things.

Some may make it to imply more to ask *in* Faith than to ask *with* Faith, or that it is more to be *in Faith*, than for *Faith* to be *in us*. To be *in* Love is more than *to* love, and when it is ſaid, *Rev.* 1. 10. that the Apoſtle was *in* the Spirit, it ſhews that not only he *had* the Spirit, and was *filled* with it, but there were great overflowings, and a ſuper-abundance of the Spirit. This the Apoſtle ſeems to call, *James* 5. 15. the Prayer *of* Faith, as if their *Faith* rather prayed than *they*, as *Paul* ſpeaks, *It is not I, but the Grace of God in me*, when Faith rather may be ſaid to act *us* than we to act *Faith*.

But I ſuppoſe thoſe high degrees of Faith cannot be meant here, becauſe it is ſaid, that they who have not this Faith, muſt not think to receive any thing, not the leaſt; if ſo, then the higheſt degrees of Faith ſhould be required for the obtaining the loweſt degrees of Mercy; but Scripture promiſes are made to the *Truth*, and not to the *degrees* of Grace. To Faith that is but as a grain of Muſtard-ſeed to remove Mountains, and to Love that is but a ſpark to be victorious, *Mat.* 12. 20. but I ſhall rather endeavour to ſhew you how Faith is taken here, than how it is taken in other places; therefore, *To ask in Faith*, may be here ſpoken in reference to the Perſon that prayes, *viz.* he that prayes muſt be in the Faith a faithful or Righteous Perſon. The Scripture is full to this purpoſe, as *Pſalm* 66. 18. *If I regard iniquity in mine heart*, though my tongue do not plead for it, nay, though it ſpeaks againſt it, though I refrain from it in my Life; for one may love the ſin we commit not, and if I do ſo regard it in mine heart God will not hear my Prayers: if I give it ſo much as a good look, for ſo the *Hebrew*, *if I ſee iniquity in my heart*, if I take pleaſure in ſin, for *David* calls it *painful iniquity*, for ſo in the *Hebrew*. No Saint can live without committing ſin, but all Saints live without regarding it in their hearts. So alſo *James* 5. 15. *The Prayer of a righteous man availeth much*, how much is not ſet down, becauſe it cannot be ſet down *how much* it avails, as *much* as they *pleaſe*, they may have what they *will*; but for a wicked man though his Prayers were effectual they avail not much, ſince their deſires are for temporals. The other places are full to this point, *viz.* that the Prayers of none but Righteous perſons are accepted with God, as *John* 9. 31. *Chap.* 1. 15. *Prov.* 28. 9. 1 *John* 3. 15.

I. To

I. To this may be objected, that many unregenerate and profligate Wretches have obtained by Prayer, as scoffing *Ishmael*, *Gen.* 21. 17. nay *Ahab*, a man that sold himself to work wickedness, prevailed with God, for an adjournment of the Judgment denounced?

I answer, 1. This was done by way of Common providence, or Gods prerogative, not by way of promise, so that they could not reasonably expect that their Prayer should be heard.

2. God did this to honour the Ordinance of Prayer. As when our children come and tell us of some poor body, though we may not think it fit to relieve him in respect of his wants, yet we give him, for fear we should hinder our children from acts of Charity; for they not knowing our reason of denying him relief, will expound it to be our neglect of the poor. So many times God may give to bad men, lest good men should be discouraged from Prayer.

3. God gives to wicked men when they pray, oft-times for the strengthning of his peoples Faith; for they may be sure if God hears the Croakings of Ravens, he will hear the Mournings of Doves.

II. You may farther say, are wicked men bound to pray, since their Prayers are an abomination, and they cannot ask in Faith?

I answer, 1. Inability to pay a debt, doth not acquit one from it, nor Cancel the Obligation. If one blows out the Candle, one cannot excuse ones self for not working, by saying that they could not work in the dark; nor can a boy excuse himself from saying the Lesson he hath torn out of his Book.

2. Because wicked men break others of Gods Commandments, it cannot justifie them in the breaking of this, sin doth super-induce a new Obligation, *viz.* to punishment, but doth not cancel their former, *viz.* to Duty.

3. Wicked men sin not in praying, but in praying so.

4. Doubtless the wickedst man in the World is bound to desire Grace.

III. But doth not this make God a respecter of persons, since he will hear none but his own Children, and them that love him; if a Judge should favour his relations in Judicature, he should be unjust.

I answer No, God is no respecter of persons, by doing thus.

1 Because the Prayers of Saints better, as well as their persons nearer; for the Prayers of the wicked are lazy, irreverent, brutish, wanton Prayers, *Hos.* 7. 14. if Gods People should pray so, God would not hear them neither.

2. If Unbelievers could pray better than Saints, yet God might acquit

quit the Saint and condemn the Unbeliever, as a Judge may pass Sentence against one who hath paid ninety and nine pounds of an hundred, and acquit another who hath not paid a farthing, if his surety hath paid it.

3. Though in matter of Justice we are not to respect persons, *Levit.* 19. 15. yet in matters of favour we may, *Gal.* 6. 10. This may be the first meaning of the words, but not only, nor as I conceive the chief. Therefore,

II. *To ask in Faith*, is, to believe, that *all* we say in Prayer is *true*, when we confess our selves to be grievous sinners, we are to think our selves to be as great sinners as we say we are; when we call God Almighty our Father, we are to believe him to be so.

Then the poor Soul will say, Alas I cannot pray in Faith; for I cannot say our *Father*, since I do not believe that I am his child, how then can I call him *Father*?

I Answer, 1. Thou mayst call him *Father*, for he is my *Father*; if thou shouldst see divers children playing some untowardness in the street, and should see a man that passed by, go and single out one of them, and correct him, and yet the child should follow him, would you not say he was the father of that child? for a strange child would flye *from him*, or flye *at* him if he should strike him. Dost thou not follow God when he corrects thee? be of good comfort, God is thy Father, and thou art his child.

When that precious man Mr. *Marcot* was in great anguish, fearing that God was not his Father, these words were impressed on his mind, *If I am not thy Father, why dost thou follow after me?*

Nay, not only God *is* thy Father, but thou *thinkest* so also. When *Naamans* servants called him father, what did they mean, but to shew that they acknowledged that he carried himself rather as a Father than a Master. When the Prodigal returned, though he acknowleded that he was not worthy to be called his Son, yet he called him Father since he had failed of nothing that might be expected from a loving tender Father. Mayst not thou call God thy Father upon this account, hath he not dealt with thee in abundance of tender Compassion, nay more than the tendrest Parent in the World. Give God the Glory due to his goodness, call him Father; for thou mayst truly say he hath dealt so with thee. The same Mr. *Marcot* being troubled upon the same account, *viz.* the fear that God was not his Father, had these words come into his mind, with power, *viz.* *If I am not thy Father, am I thy Enemy?* God argues thus with the *Jews*, *Deut.* 32. 6.

III. We

III. We are to believe, that whatſoever we ask of God in Prayer is according to his will, 1 *John.*5. 14.

The poor doubting Soul will ſay then, I dare not pray for the recovery of my child, ſince I know not whether it be the will of God it ſhall recover or no.

I Anſwer, Thine asking what God hath decreed not to give, makes not thy Prayer ſinful, but thine asking what he hath forbid thee to deſire; for the will of Gods Decree is not the rule for us to walk by, but the will of his Command, *Deut.*29.29. If what we pray for be ſuch as is lawful and good for us to deſire, though God ſhould tell us by a Prophet that he would not grant it, yet we might lawfully pray for it, and be blameleſs; for ſo did *David*, 2 *Sam.*12. nay, though God ſhould ſend us word by a Prophet that we ſhould dye and not live, yet we might pray, and not only be blameleſs but ſucceſsful, for ſo was *Hezekiah*, nay, though God ſhould forbid us to pray, yet ſince he commands us to pray in his Word, we may pray and be heard; for though God bid *Jacob* let him go, yet he wreſtled on and obtained the bleſſing: *and. Moſes*, though God bid him let him alone, yet *Moſes* did not let him alone, and prevail'd. So then to ask things according to the will of God, is to ask nothing that is unlawful to ask, as for one to pray that God would proſper us in evil ways, this is to ask what is not according to his will. I ſay, you are to pray for nothing that is any way unlawful to be deſired. Now it is not enough that the thing it ſelf be lawful to be deſired, but the end for which we deſire it muſt be lawful; for if we deſire lawful things for unlawful ends, we ask amiſs, *Jam.* 4.3. The end why we deſire ſuch a mercy muſt be ſuch, as God approves of by his Word, as well as the thing it ſelf. To deſire gifts of Edification for Oſtentation, though according to the Will of God as to the thing deſired, yet as to the end it is abominable.

As concerning the matter of our Prayers we are to believe, as hath been ſaid, ſo as to God we are to believe ſeveral things. Indeed ſcarce any of his Attributes but ſome way or other we are to act our Faith upon in Prayer, but I ſhall chooſe ſome few on which the eye of Faith is eſpecially fixed in Prayer.

The firſt is Gods *Omniſcience*, for elſe we ſhall be at a great loſs.

I. If we believe not this, how can we be aſſured that God hears our Prayers.

For 1. In reſpect of the number of Prayers, there being Milons of of Prayers put up at the ſame time to God, if he be not Omniſcient how

How is it possible he should hear all, if any should not be heard, how knowest thou that thine is not the Prayer that is not heard.

2. In respect of the Secrecy of Prayer; for except God know our hearts he cannot know our prayers; for it is the heart that prays, the tongue only speaks, *Orat mens, lingua loquitur.*

3. If God knew not the heart, the poor soul who pray'd with sighs and groans that cannot be expressed, should find no acceptance; when the hypocrite that speaks much and means nothing, shall be heard for his much babling.

4. The Saints ask such things that require infinite Knowledge and Wisdom to do for us; for when we desire God to make us know him, it requires more wisdom, than for us to teach an Infant the Mathematicks. So we desire God to cure us of our spiritual distempers, alas they are so various, so contrary, so deeply rooted in our Natures, we are such froward unruly Patients, that it requires infinite Wisdom to heal us; for when God goes to cure our Pride by afflicting us, then our impatiences is increased: That which is the cure of one corruption increaseth another.

If we believe not Gods Wisdom and Omniscience, we cannot acquiesce in Gods answer of prayers; for we may *suffer*, but not *acquiesce* in Gods answer of Prayers.

II. We are to believe Gods *Providence*, that he rules and orders all things. Who so thinks that all things are ruled by second Causes, by the Power and Policy of Men, or by the Stars, or Chance, they will not Pray at all, or go to God meerly as a refuge: We shall pray to God, but trust to our selves, or to Midicines when we are sick, and to our food when we are well. We may be confident we shall be delivered, but we shall not at all trust that God will deliver us. To strengthen our Faith in this we must know, that those things that seem to be least within the compass of Providence, are wholly guided by it.

1. Things Natural; God makes the Sun to arise, and the Rain to fall, *Mat.* 5. *Gives to every seed his own body*, 1 Cor. 15.

2. The smallest things they escape not Providence; God numbers the hairs of our head, *Mat.* 10. 30.

3. Things casual, *Pro.* 16. 33. That which we call Chance-medley, is providential as to God: The man 1 *Kings* drew a Bow *at a venture*, and yet God directed it to an hairs breadth.

4. The Counsels of men, yea against God, yet are ordered by the determinate Counsel of God, *Acts* 2. 23.

5. Things most unruly; The raging Sea goes so far and no further

by Gods Decree: the roaring Lion cannot destroy a Swine, not afflict nor tempt a Saint, without Gods leave, *Job.* 1. *Luke* 22. 32. The wrath of Man as well as the rage of the Devil, is ordered and restrained by the Wisdom and Power of God. *Psal.* 66. 10.

6. The skill and inventions of men, *Isa.* 28. 27, 28.

7. Sin it self, whether of Omission or Commission, as silence and discord in Musick, serves to make the Harmony sweeter.

III. Gods *Omnipotence* is to be believed, else we will stagger through unbelief. This was that in which the eminency of *Abrahams* Faith did appear, *Rom.* 4. 21. and of the Centurion's, *Mat.* 8. and Christ far more blames them that question his *Can* than his *Will*, for he doth not so much as reprove the Leper, *Mat.* 8. but so sharply reproves him, *Mar.* 9. that he makes him weep, because he said, *If thou canst*; and he saith, *If thou canst believe*, to shew that we cannot believe, if we do not believe Gods Power. We doubtless are generally faulty this way, though we are ashamed to own it, as you may see by this instance. If we have two children sick, the one whose death would be far more afflictive to us, hath some cold or some other small distemper, the other of some mortal disease, and given up by Physitians; thou prayest for the recovery of both, but for which of those two recovery art thou least confident? is it not of his who is most sick? and why so? but because thou questionest Gods Power and Providence: If thou shalt say, my sins are so great, God will not hear my Prayers and heal my Child, for if indeed that were the reason of thy fearing that God will not hear thee, thou wouldst rather fear it as to thine other child, since his death would be more afflictive.

Now the Saints have more reason to strengthen their Faith in the Omnipotence of God in Prayer, than wicked men; for because the things worldly men desire, need not Omnipotence to do. A Creature may do what they desire, except God will withdraw his common Providence, for one that is worth an hundred thousand pounds can make a poor man rich; and some Medicines in an ordinary way of Providence have vertue to cure many Diseases: But the things the People of God desire, cannot be done but by Omnipotence, *Ephes.* 1. 19.

IV. We must act our Faith upon his *Goodness* and *Bounty*, for we must not only have high thoughts of Gods other Excellencies, but of his Goodness also, of his abundant willingness to do us good, and loathness to afflict us, for surely he never afflicts us but in case of necessity, 1 *Pet.* 1. *If need be you are in many Tribulations.* When he afflicts us he only gives us *necessaries*, but when he bestows Mercies, he gives us not only for our necessity, but *richly to enjoy*. When we go to a Covetous man

man for mony, he parts with every penny as with a drop of blood; for us to think God parts so with his Mercies, that he is hard to be intreated, and that he is an hard Master either for *Work* or *Wages*, are thoughts utterly unworthy, and shamefully dishonourable to the Goodness of God. If thy Child, whose finger if it should but ake, thine heart akes, should think thou grudgest him every bit of meat he eats, thou wouldst think him a wretched Child unworthy of thy tender affections; and must it not be far worse in thee to have such thoughts of God? since *tam pius nemo, tam pater nemo.* Was it so great a grief to *Peter* to have Christ question his love? *John* 21. 17. though he had given but sad testimony of his Love but lately; and can it choose but much offend God for thee to question Gods Love to thee, nay, his Goodness in it self, when God hath given thee no cause of either, *Mal.* 2. 2. We should go to God with as much confidence of his Love, and readiness to do us good, as the Child doth to the tenderest Parent, as we do to the dearest Friend we have in the whole world, and much more abundantly: If we do not believe that the goodness of God is as much above the goodness and love of our dearest friend, as we account his Wisdom and Power above our friends, we have unworthy thoughts of that Attribute which God hath most abundantly manifested, and would have most glorified; and the love our friend bears us is but a drop from and of that Ocean that is in God. Doubtless God loves his Enemies more than we love our Friends; he loves us more (if we love him) than we love our selves or him. Surely God loves the weakest Saint on Earth more than the highest Angel in Heaven loves him; for when God saith, that he *So loved the World*, it was such a *Sic* there was no *Sicut* for it; it might not be said as the Angels loved God. Ah we deal unworthily with God in having base low thoughts of his goodness, he hath little deserved it at our hands, he that hath done such Wonders and Miracles of Mercies for us, and hath promised to do more; Say that every Mercy is too great for thee to receive, but say not that any is too great for God to give: Surely, surely God is more willing to give, than we are to receive Mercies.

But you will say, *If God be so willing to bestow Mercies, why doth he not bestow them without Prayers, and such importunity?*

I answer, God doth not thus because he is not willing, but because we are not fit for Mercies, for God *waits to be Gracious*: The tender Mother had rather give her child Cordials than bitter Pills, but her child is sick: By our Prayers we make not God more willing, but we become more prepared for Mercies; for our Prayers exercise, and so strengthen Grace, and strong Grace weakens and mortifies Corruption, and then we are fit

for mercies. God only ſtayes while he may bleſs us indeed, as *Jabez* phraſeth it. One that is in a Boat and pulls a Rope whoſe other end is tied to a Rock, pulls not the Rock to the Boat, but the Boat to the Rock; ſo our importunities move not God, but us.

But you will ſay, When we pray for others this reaſon holds not, for their graces are not encreaſed by our praying for their deliverances from miſery or danger, or the Church from perſecution.

I anſwer, It is true, but our Prayers add to our reward, for God is in goodneſs as Satan is in badneſs, and much more abundantly; whereas when Satan hath a Commiſſion and intends to do ſome miſchief, he, as oft as he can, engageth Witches to put him upon doing that which he intends to do, howſoever that he may involve them in the guilt; as if they themſelves, or that he had not done it if they had not put him upon it. So God, that the Saints may have the reward of the good he doth to others, as if they themſelves had done it, or as if God would not have done it without their Prayers, puts them upon praying for thoſe Mercies for others, which he will do howſoever, *Iſa.* 59. 16.

III. The third object of Faith are the *Promiſes*, and there are three kinds, ſome *to* Prayer, ſome *of* Prayer, ſome to the *Perſon* Praying. We are to act our Faith upon all, but for brevity ſake (for I am forced to Contract) I ſhall anſwer but on Objection.

The poor Soul will ſay, *I do not believe I have any Intereſt in the Promiſes, therefore I cannot pray in Faith.*

I anſwer: To obtain the Mercies included in a promiſe, it is not required that we ſhould believe our Intereſt in it, but the truth; not that God will perform to us, but to thoſe to whom it belongs, though you do not believe it belongs to you, for the Promiſes made to Graces, are made to them that have them, not to them that believe; as for example, the promiſes made to Faith, are made to them that have Faith, though they believe not that they do believe; and that poor Souls doubt that God will never make good any promiſe to them, proceeds not from any doubt of Gods veracity of faithfulneſs, but of their own unworthineſs and non-intereſt in them.

IV. The fourth and main Object of Faith which our Faith muſt eye in our Prayers, is *Chriſt*, in whom all the Promiſes are Yea and Amen, who hath reconciled the Perſon and Attributes of God; and concerning Chriſt we are to believe,

I. The great love God bears to Chriſt, which is doubtleſs greater than to the whole Creation; for to which of the Angels ſaid he at any time,

Thou

Thou art my beloved in whom I am well pleased? Gods Love to Christ is not only greater, but diffusive; for the Love that God bears to Christ is as the Oyl that was poured upon the head of *Aaron*, which ran down to the skirts of his Garments; so the love that God bears to Christ terminates not in the Person of Christ, but is communicated to all that are his. As *Haman*, to shew the great hatred he bore to *Mordecai*, would not bound his malice on the person of *Mordecai*, but would destroy the whole Nation: So God thought it too small a Testimony of his Love to Christ to be well pleased with Christ (for so he is with the Angels) but he is well pleased in Christ with the whole World, I mean all Nations. We must believe this, or we cannot expect any favour for his sake. His Love to Christ is so great, that his Love to Christ is greater than his hatred to Sinners; so that any Sinner may be reconciled and accepted through Christ. God came to reconcile God and Sinners, not God and Sin. As one who desires the King to be reconciled to such a Traytor, doth not desire him to be reconciled to the Treason, but to the Traytor.

II. We are to believe the fulness of Christs satisfaction, and the greatness of the value and efficacy of the death of Christ; for if Justice be not satisfied, we have no Throne of Grace, but a Seat and Bar of Justice to come before. The Blood of Christ hath a pacifying, purifying, purchasing, perfuming, reconciling, satisfying, justifying vertue: It pacifies Gods Wrath, it reconciles and justifies our Persons, it purifies our Nature, it perfumes our Duties, it purchases our Inheritance.

III. We are to believe the efficacy and infallible success of Christs Intercession. The fulness of Christ Intercession is in this, that he doth three things for us, all that we stand in need of, according to what was Typified by the High-Priest, for he did three things:

1. He sprinkled the blood upon the Mercy-seat, hereby an attonement was made as to our sins, they being pardoned.

2. He went in with Incense, hereby our duties were perfumed; so God is said to inhabit the Praises of his People, and to dwell in thick darkness, *i. e.* in the thick smoke of the Incense.

3. He had the names of the Tribes engraven on his breast or breast-plate: Christ pleads the love he bears to his People. Three places the names of the Saints are written in, out of either whereof nor Men nor Devils can blot them out, *viz.* in the Book of Life, on the palms of his hands, and on the heart of Christ. I may add the fourth thing the High-Priest did when he entred into the Holy Place, *viz.* he went in with

with all his rich Priestly Garments, to shew we should be cloathed with the rich Robes of Christs Righteousness, for what the High-Priest did, he did not in his personal, but in his publick capacity. Now the Efficacy of his Intercession was not only from the wonderful Love God bore to Christ, from the unparalleld Interest Christ had in the Father; by these means we may expect all acts of favour, but we have Justice on our side, for favour is an arbitrary thing, therefore Christ is our Advocate, 1 *John* 2, 1, 2. he presents our case not by way of petition, but by way of pleading; for Advocates do not petition but plead.

So then Christ doth four things as to our Prayers. 1. He endites them by his Spirit, he perfumes them by his Merit, then he Presents our Prayers and Persons, for we have access through him, *Eph.* 3. 12. and then superadds his own Intercession, his Blood crying louder than our sins, and better things than our Prayers.

IV. We are to believe and improve this Truth, *viz.* That the Father exceedingly delights to honour Christ, and hereby God wonderfully honours Christ, by pardoning and receiving into favour such rebellious sinners as we are for his sake, by forgiving any thing for his sake. A sinner cannot please God better, than by coming with confidence for pardon for his sake. If we come for pardon or Mercies, and our Confidence arises from our low thoughts of the number or sinfulness of our sins, or of Gods hatred of sin, or our ability to satisfie Justice or deserve Mercy, our Confidence is desperate Impudence and Arrogance; but if purely from the high esteem we have of the incomprehensibleness of Christ Satisfaction, and of Christs Interest in Gods Love, and of the Fathers delight to honour Christ; such Confidence is precious and acceptable with God, and whosoever hath it, may go with as much freedom and assurance of favour, as if he had never sinned; with as much as *Adam* in his Innocency, or the Angels in Glory. Alas we do not believe nor improve these Truths, for if we did, we might have any thing, for Christ hath Interest enough in God to bear us out, and procure any Mercy.

V. We are to believe, improve, and obey Christs Command, *viz.* in *John* 14. 13, 14, 16, 23. the former truths give us great hope, but this strong Consolation, for though such a great person had never so much interest in some other great Person, with whom we had to do, yet without a Commission from him we might not go in his Name; but Christ hath not only given us leave, but a Command; and now it is not an arbitrary thing, we may do or not do, but we must do. This is the Incomprehensible Goodness of God, that what is for our good he commands

mands us, that not only we may be put on the more to obtain what is good for us, but that it may be an act of obedience, and so we may be rewarded for procuring our own happiness.

So much for the things we are to believe, now for the manner of believing.

1. We are to believe those things of God and Christ with an Historicall Faith.

2. With a Faith of Recumbency, we are to rely upon the Power, Wisdom and Goodness of God, and upon Christs Interest in God, &c.

3. Saints are by way of duty, but not by way of a necessary Condition of obtaining whatsoever they ask, to believe with the Faith of assurance of obtaining whatsoever we pray for. By Faith here in the Text is not meant, that we must without any doubt or wavering believe that we shall receive in kind whatsoever we ask, even the very thing we pray for.

1. The Leper was cured, though prayed with an *if thou wilt*.

2. Those in distrion should put up no acceptable Prayers, since they have not Faith of assurance of obtaining.

3. Christ when he comes at the day of Judgment, he shall not find this Faith on the Earth, *Luke* 18.8. and yet *vers.* 7. it is said, God will hear those Prayers.

4. The Apostle forbids this Faith, *vers.* 7. therefore it is not the Faith here commanded, for then it should run thus, You must believe you shall receive the thing you ask for, but if you do not, you must not. Many more arguments may be brought to prove this, but these shall suffice, besides what shall be said in the positive handling this Question, *viz. What Faith is required as to our believing absolutely and undoubtedly in kind the very thing we ask*: which I shall answer in several Propositions.

I. When we ask Temporal blessings as we ought, we are bound to believe we shall receive them as we ask them; for our Prayers for Temporal things should be spiritual as to the end, and moderate as to their measure, and conditional as to their effect upon us, *i. e.* if it be for our good. Now since our desires are to be Conditional, and Gods Promises of Temporals are Conditional, we must not absolutely believe we shall receive what we ask: a Conditional Promise cannot be a foundation for an absolute Faith.

II. Our Faith and Confidence of obtaining the thing we ask, should proceed *pari passu*, should be as strong to the event as it is to the Conditions. If we are very confident what we ask is for the glory of God, or

our

our good, we must be as confident that we shall have it; for as we are to put no Condition to absolute Promises, since God hath put none; so we are to add no more Conditions to Conditional Promises than God hath put, and upon these Conditions we are as fully to rely upon Gods performance, as upon his performance of absolute Promises.

III. Though we may not ought not certainly to believe the obtaining the thing we ask, if it be Temporal, by vertue of the promise; yet by virtue of an immediate assurance God may give us of receiving the very thing we ask, we may, and indeed cannot chuse but expect it. We read of Gods dealing so with several of his Saints (with Mr. Fox, and many others.)

IV. As for spiritual blessings, they are of four sorts. 1. Of Edification, as gifts, such as speaking with Tongues, and Prophesying in the Primitive Church, and the gifts of Preaching and Praying now. Or,

2. Of Consolation, as Assurance, and the Comforts of the Spirit, the Priviledges of the Kingdom of God, as Peace and Joy in Believing.

3. Of Sanctification, as Grace and Glory. For the former, the same rules as belong to Temporals belong to these: but for saving Grace; as our Prayers ought not to be Conditional, since we are sure it is for our good, and the glory of God for us to be holy; so our Faith ought not to be conditional, but absolute and particular, that God will give us Grace and Glory, if we sincerely and fervently ask it.

Yet though I should believe that God certainly will give Grace, nay, and all other things, if good for me; yet my not believing that God will give me Grace, doth not nullifie mine interest in the Promise, but only my Comfort; nor shall it hinder Gods performance, though it hinders our expectation of receiving.

V. Though we are not absolutely to believe we shall receive Temporal blessings, or those of Consolation or Edification; yet that we do not more confidently expect the Performance of such Prayers in kind, proceeds generally from our not believing and minuting the Power and Goodness of God, and the great Interest Christ hath in God, and the rest that I have spoken of; for generally we are more confident that the thing we pray for is good for us, than we are that we shall have it.

VI. We may be confident that the restoring of our selves or our relations to health, or deliverance of them out of danger, is for our good; as they in our Saviours time, who prayed to him for these mercies, were.

VII. As

VII. As the case stands between Justifying Faith and Assurance, so the case stands as to our receiving, and our expecting the answer of our Prayers in kind.

1. As we may and shall have all the Promises that are made to Faith made good to us, though we do not believe that we have Faith, and by consequence do not believe they shall have them made good to us; so when we pray for those things God hath promised to those who love or fear God, or walk uprightly, though we do not believe we have that fear or love, or that we walk uprightly, if we have those Graces, we shall receive the Promises made to them.

2. As there are two kinds of Assurance, one which comes from the Testimony of our own Spirits, when, upon serious examination of our selves, we find that we do believe; the other, which comes from the Testimony of the Spirit of God, witnessing with our Spirits: So there are two kinds of Assurance of receiving the thing we ask, one which proceeds from our believing, and improving our believing the Power and Goodness of God, and Christ's Interest in God, and God's delighting to honour Christ, by giving the Mercies we ask in his Name; the other, from God's immediate assuring us that we shall receive the very mercy we pray for.

3. As the immediate Testimony of the Spirit comes with more evidence than the Testimony of our own Spirits, so the immediate assurance that God gives, that we shall receive the things we pray for, is clearer and fuller, than that which we have by our relying upon the Power and Goodness of God; or, to speak more properly, we do more fully rely upon the Goodness and Power of God, when God doth immediately enable us so to do, than when we work out this Confidence by our own endeavours, assisted by the ordinary concurrence of the Spirit.

4. As it is not our sin to want the immediate Testimony of the Spirit, so it is not our sin not to have this particular assurance of receiving what we ask. These Parallels may be far more enlarged, and will hold, as I think, in all particulars.

The Use of this is; 1. For Consolation, to all that love and fear God; for thy not believing God will grant thy Prayers, shall not hinder thy Prayers from being accepted and granted; for although if thine unbelief were built upon thy not believing God's power or goodness to do what thou prayest for would hinder thee, yet since thy Diffidence proceeds from thy not believing that thou art such an one as the Promises are made to, such thine unbelief shall not make the Promise of

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God of no effect, 2 *Tim.* 2. 13. In the 11 and 12 *verses*, the Apostle saith, *If we are dead with Christ* (not if we believe we are dead with Christ) *we shall live, though we do not believe we are dead, if we are dead it shall not hinder: for if we believe not, God is faithful*, 2 Tim. 2. 13. For suppose one dies and leaves such an one a Legacy, though he to whom the Legacy is left doth not know of any such Legacy, yet the Executor will not therefore not give him the Legacy; nay, though he will hardly believe it when he tells him, yet he will keep it and give it him; so the Legacies that Christ hath left to the Saints, though they little think any such Legacies are left by Christ to them, yet their ignorance *shall* not frustrate Christs Love; nay, though they will not for the present extend their hand of Faith to receive it, yet God will, and doth keep Mercy for thousands, until they will receive it, *Exod.* 34. 7.

II. The second Use, is an Use of Exhortation. 1. Put in thy Claim for Mercy, for thy Claim will hold, not according to thy sense, knowledge, or belief, that thou hast an Interest, but according to the Truth of thine Interest. Suppose thou shouldest promise to give to every one of thy Children such a gift if they were good Children. Suppose one of your Children who had obeyed your commands, and had been very inquisitive to know your Will; I say, suppose such a Child should sit weeping because he thought he had not obeyed your commands, and because he thought you were angry with him, and upon that account would not come for your promised gift; would you not therefore give it him? nay would you not onely be pleased with his obedience, but that he took so to heart your supposed anger? So, O poor Soul, that sitteth weeping with thine eyes full of tears, and thine heart full of sorrow, under the sense of Gods supposed displeasure, shall not God *wipe all tears from thine eyes*, and give thee the Promises he hath made to thee, though thou, through the sense of thy unworthiness, dost not believe thou hast any interest in them?

2. The second advice is, That thou shouldest endeavour to obtain the Graces to which the Promises are made, *viz. Fear and love of God, and uprightness of heart*, &c. whilst others are examining, and going from Minister to Minister to know whether they have those Graces, be thou getting of them. For,

1. Thou shalt be sure to get an interest in the Promises, for they are made to such as have the Graces, not to those that know that they have those Graces; and if thou hast a Title, thou shalt have possession.

2. By getting greater degrees of Graces, the trouble of examination

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tion will be needless, it will save thee that labour, whereas otherwise thou wilt perpetually be put to examination: As for instance; Thou findest a spark of fire, and coverest it up again, and letteſt it lie wet, to morrow thou wilt be as far to ſeek, and wilt as hardly find the ſpark, and know whether there be any fire to morrow as to day. Another, knowing where to have fire cloſe by, knows ſhe can as ſoon fetch it from her Neighbour, as find it on her own Hearth, if there be but a ſpark or two, ſhe therefore fetches ſome, and blows up into a flame, and ſhe layes on fewel to keep in the fire; So thou knoweſt where thou mayeſt have Gods love, *viz.* from God, *who is near unto them that call upon him*, they know they may have it ſooner by Prayer, than find it by examination; this they blow into a flame: And as when the fire flames, we may be ſure there is fire without poring to find it; So when thy Graces are in an eminent degree, they are ſo apparent, that one that hath but half an eye may ſee them.

3. By getting the Conditions to which the Promiſe is made, thou ſhalt often get what is better than the Promiſe it ſelf; for the Promiſe is often Temporal, when the Condition is Spiritual.

III. Study much, or rather meditate much upon theſe great Goſpel Myſteries of Chriſts Satisfaction, of Chriſts intereſt in the Fathers Love, and of the Fathers delight to honour the Son, by giving Mercies, and pardoning ſinners for his ſake. Know that thou greatly diſhonoureſt Chriſt when thou goeſt timerouſly to God for any Mercy in his Name, and it greatly argues thine infidelity: Suppoſe thy Friend that was bound with thee for ſome great ſum of Money, and he hearing there were Sergeants to arreſt thee, ſhould put himſelf into their hands to ſave thee from Priſon, and he ſhould be carried to Priſon, and pay the Debt, and ſend thee word that he had paid the Debt every farthing, if thou ſhouldeſt notwithſtanding be afraid to ſee thy Creditor, or ſtir abroad, would it not argue that thou believedſt not thy Friend had paid the Debt?

IV. Go then with Confidence to God, in the Name of Chriſt, ſince Chriſt hath bid thee, or elſe thou haſt ſtrange thoughts of Chriſt:

Suppoſe a Friend of yours ſhould bid you go to ſuch a great man for ſuch a Courteſie, and ſhould tell thee that he had ſpoken to him in thy behalf, and bid thee not fear, for he could have any thing of him that he ſpoke to him for, and ſhould bid thee go to him in his Name, and tell him he ſent thee; if thou ſhouldeſt ſtand conſidering what to do, and ſhouldeſt fear, that for all thy Friend profeſſed, he had ſo great an Intereſt in that great man, you ſhould not find it ſo when you came to

him, would not this ſhow, that you feared your Friend boaſted of more Intereſt than he had?

Chriſt hath plainly bid us go to the Father in his Name from him, and that we ſhall have any thing whatſoever; if we doubt whether, when we go to the Father in his Name, we ſhall obtain, doth it not plainly argue our low thoughts of Chriſts Intereſt in the Fathers Love, and that Chriſt hath higher thoughts of his Intereſt in his Fathers love than indeed he hath. The ſenſe of thine own unworthineſs *ſhould* by no means hinder thee, except thou wenteſt to God in thine *own name*; for the Queſtion in this Caſe, is not how God loves thee, but how God loves Chriſt? Thou haſt thoughts high enough of God's Love to Chriſt, if thou knoweſt that God loves Chriſt more than he hates any ſinner in the World. Thy thoughts are not high enough of Chriſts Love to thee, if thou thinkeſt Chriſt will deny thee any thing; nor haſt thou worthy thoughts of God's Love to Chriſt, if thou thinkeſt God will deny Chriſt any thing, or any one that comes to him in his Name, whom he bids ſo to do; for in ſo doing, he doth not ſo properly deny thee, as Chriſt.

Of

Of the Cause of Inward Trouble, and how a Christian should behave himself when Inward and Outward Troubles meet.

Gen. 42. v. 21, 22.

21. *And they said one to another, (yea but) verily we are guilty concerning our Brother, in that we saw the anguish of his Soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us.*

22. *And* Reuben *answered them, saying, Spake I not to you, saying, Sin not against the Child, and ye would not hear? therefore behold also, his blood is required.*

IN this Chapter we have the Description of our Fathers, the Patriarchs; their first journey into *Egypt* for Corn, to relieve their Famine in *Canaan*.

Herein is considerable, 1. Their entertainment there; it was harsh, with much trouble, more danger; the great Lord-Treasurer of *Egypt* would not know them, but treats them roughly, *vers.* 7. takes them for Spies, *vers.* 9. rejects their defence, *vers.* 12. renews, and out of their own mouths reinforceth his Charge, and suspition of them, *vers.* 14. threatens to commit them, *vers.* 15, 16. commits them, *vers.* 17. puts Bonds upon one of them, till the rest should quit and clear themselves and him of suspition, *vers.* 19, 20. This is their cold and sad well-come and entertainment.

2. The

2. The consequent of this their hard and distressful usage and entreatment, and that is trouble of mind, horror and perplexity of spirit, *And they said one to another*, &c.

The words then are the holy Ghosts Report of the Case of the Sons of *Jacob*, their being spiritually troubled, by way of Conviction, or Judgement in their own, (which also is the Lords) Court of Conscience.

Wherein we observe the

I. Actors { Registers, Accusers, Witnesses, Judge, Tormentors } themselves.

II. Process in judging themselves; Wherein,

1. Self-accusation of the cause of their trouble, their sin, with the utmost aggravations, *viz.*

1. In general, *We are guilty.*

2. In particular, Of Envy, Wrong against a Brother; whom in bitterness we saw without pity, and were deaf to his intreaties; Obstinate to the admonition of *Reuben*, and abiding therein.

3. In self-condemnation, *Therefore is this distress come*, and his blood required.

III. Execution; Wherein,

1. The smart, by inward terror and consternation, their heart misgiving them, is deeply affected, and that makes them very abrupt, *Yea verily, i. e.* Alas! what shall we do?

2. The circumstance of the time, when couched in. And,

1. In general, Many years after the offence was done.

2. In special, Now that they were outwardly in an afflicted condition.

Doct. 1. *Every Man hath a Conscience within himself.*

2. *The guilt of sin turns a Mans Conscience, i. e. himself against himself.*

3. *Conscience is apt to be very sensible, when 'tis awakened, not only of sin, but particular sins, and the particular circumstances and degrees thereof to the utmost; and charges all upon a mans self, not upon Gods Decrees or Providence, nor upon the Devil or evil Company*, &c.

4. *Envy, unnatural affection, cruelty, deafness to the intreaties of the distressed, obstinacy against Warning and Admonition, continuance in sin without repentance*, &c. *are very heinous and dangerous.*

5. *The*

5. *The Accusations and Condemnation of Conscience are terrible, or cause terror beyond all expression.*

6. *There is a time when God will call over sins that are past, and charge them upon the Conscience.*

7. *Inward trouble of mind sometimes, yea, usually comes upon the People of God, when they are outwardly in some distress.*

I shall speak of the two last, and in them something of all the other, saving the fourth, containing the particular matter of Fact, *viz.* Cruelty and Blood, which I shall not meddle withal.

These are then the two Doctrines:

1. *There is a time when God will call over past sins with horrour, &c.*

2. *This time of inward horrour falls in with outward trouble.*

Doct. 1. *There is a time when God will call over sins that are past, without repentance, and charge them upon the Conscience with horrour.*

Here's the Case; The Sons of *Jacob* had formerly trespassed against God in the matter of their Brother, *And they said*, &c. now, and not till now that we read of, is the guilt & horror of it reflected upon their Consciences. In sin, the *act* passes, the *guilt* and *consequent* remains.

Sin is like some poyson, which may be taken at one time, and work at another, it may be seven years after: 'Twas now more than seven and seven years, that the poyson of this sin began to work.

'Tis true of { Family sins, *Hos.* 1. 4. / National sins, *Ezek.* 4. 4, 5. *Lam.* 5. 7. / Personal sins, as here: And that's the Case.

1. Not only of the wicked, as in the Case of Cain, Gen. 4. 7. *If thou doest ill, sin lies at the door*, to shut out Mercies, and let in Judgements; and that as a fell Mastiff, or a sleeping Lion, ready to take thee by the Throat, whenever the Lord awakens guilt in the Conscience.

2. But also of the Godly, *Psal.* 19. 12. & 25. 7. *Job* 13. 26. *Thou makest me to possess the sins of my youth.*

Reas. 1. From God. *Reas.* 1.

1. God remembers all, *Amos* 8. 7. *As I live, saith the Lord, I will forget none of their works.* 1 Sam. 15. 2. *I remember what* Amaleck *did*, &c. God hath three Books;

1. Of *Prescience*, wherein he writes down our Names, and his purposes concerning us. The Arminians deny that Book.

2. Of *Providence*, wherein he writes down our Names, and all his care over us. The Epicure and Atheist deny this, as also the former.

3. Of

3. Of *Postscience* or *remembrance*, wherein he writes down our Names, and all the particulars of our carriage towards him.

1. Whether they be good; no act of Piety or Charity, not a cup of cold water from the Spring of Love, not a drop of tears from the Spring of Godly sorrow, not a sigh from the bottom of a broken heart, but it's taken notice of, hotled, recorded, *Mal.* 3. 16. Or,

2. Bad; not a wicked thought, a malicious scoff, or wicked action, word, motion, but God marks it, and sets it down in the Book of his Remembrance. *Psal.* 50. 21.

Reas. 2. 2. God need not reflect, or look back, for he hath all things present before him, that ever were, are, or are to come, *viz.*

1. In *Speculo decreti.*

2. In *Causis particularibus.*

Gods Knowledge, (called fore-knowledge, and remembrance, in respect of us, and the things known) is as his being, altogether in *puncto aternitatis.* There is not in God *first* and *second* of time, and cause; no *was* and *is* to come, but all *is.* There is not with God beginning, succession, and end, but his Name is *I am*, and so is knowledge as himself, *yesterday, to day, and the same for ever*, 2 Pet. 3. 8. The knowledge of men, is as of one standing on the shore, where some Ships are past, and out of sight one way, others to come, and out of sight another way, others in sight right over against him; but the Knowledge of God, is of one on the top of an high Mountain, where with one view, *all things are present*, Heb. 4. 13.

Reas. 3. 3. God also seals up our iniquities as in a bag, *Job* 14. 17. as the Clerk of the Sizes seals up the Indictments for the next Circuit; nay God himself will bag them, and seal them up with his own hand & signet. *Deut.* 32. 34. God speaking of the provocations of his People, saith, *Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed among my treasure?* So strict and earnest is God for security, as we say, *Sure bind, sure find.* What more sure and safe, than that which God himself layes up in Bag and Cabinet, and Seals among his Jewels? As when God makes up his Jewels of Mercy, he will remember them, *Mal.* 3. 17. So when he casts up his Treasures of Wrath, he will remember them.

Reas. 4. 4. God's Truth engages him in this case, his Word cannot pass away, now he hath said it, *Exod.* 24. 7. he will by no means acquit the guilty, (*i.e.* Unless the blood of sprinkling for repentance and remission be applyed) it's said again, *Psal.* 68. 21. I will wound the head; and again, *Isa.* 65. 20. *The sinner an hundred years old is accursed.*

Now as the Godly look to have God as good as his word for good,

good, so the wicked must look to have God as good as his word for evil, *Did not my word take hold of your Fathers?* Zach. 1. 6.

5. No time can remit God's anger; if you offend a man, and he be angry, you may get out of the way, and time will wear off the memory of the offence, or at least aswage his passion; but 'tis not so with God, for if he be once angry, he is for ever angry, the same cause, which is sin unrepented, remaining. *Psal.* 7. 11. *God is angry with the wicked every day*, for the sins he commits one day; the anger of the Lord, unless he works a change in us, abides upon us, burning to the bottom of Hell. Psal. 90. 11. *O! as his fear is, so is his wrath*, and a thousand times more. *Reas.* 5.

6. Lastly, The sinner is as much under the Power of God at one time, as at another, forty, a hundred, a thousand years after a sin is committed, as when the sin was first done. *Reas.* 6.

As the People of God are born up with that word, *Behold, the hand of the Lord is not shortned that he cannot save*, Isa. 59. 1. So the wicked sink under the terror of that word, *Ezek.* 22. 14. *Can thy heart hold, and thine hands be strong when I shall visit, when I shall deal with you?* saith the Lord.

This is the first Reason from God.

Reas. 2. From sin. In a two-fold consideration of every sin, wherein there are two things which make sin unrepented, sure to be called back.

1. There is in every sin, a breach of the eternal Rule of Righteousness. 1 *John* 3. 4. Now the breach of an Eternal Law, must needs be Eternal, unless he which is Eternal, make it up (*i. e.* Christ in giving Repentance and Remission) make a breach in a stone-Wall; you may come many years after and find it as you left it, and it must hold as long as the Wall holds, if it be not made up; even so it is in this case. Let one come from the dead and warn us, those poor cursed Castawayes are still, and must be still, and ever, crying out under the Wrath of God. What is the reason, I pray? Verily, not only because they sinned out of an affection and spring to sin for ever, but also because every sin is objectively infinite and eternal, being against the Infinite Eternal Law of the Eternal God; now the Law being wronged by the sinner, demands and sollicits the Justice and Vengeance of God against him, till it be satisfied to the utmost farthing; therefore till then (*i. e.* for ever) must the wrath of God abide upon him; and if time wears not out the breach of the Eternal Law in Hell, much less doth it make any alteration therein here, while thou doublest and trebblest thy sin, by going on with an impenitent heart. *Reas.* 1.

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Reas. 2. 2. There is also in every sin, a spot, stain, or brand, whereby the sinner is marked out for Judgment and condemnation; as we say of a Murtherer, as to man, so we may say of every sin (which is hatred, and so murther of the Blessed God) as to God, there is always some mark or token whereby he is known; and that is the *maculæ*, which sin doth impress upon him; now this also is an indelible Character, as the former of guilt was, (save only when upon the penitent heart changing application of the blood of sprinkling, there is made an alteration of the case). It is plain, *Jer.* 17. 1. *It is written with a Pen of Iron, and the point of a Diamond.* Jer. 2. 22. *Though thou take thee much Nitre, and wash thee with much Sope, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord. David* cries out so, *Psal.* 51. *O wash me, purge me!* &c. This is the second reason from sin.

Deut. 32. 5. Jer. 13. 23. Jer. 17. 1.

The third is from the sinner himself, *i. e.* from his own Conscience.

There is in every rational Creature, a certain thing called *Conscience*; upon the account of which also, sin must needs be kept upon the File for a back-blow. Know here that,

There are divers acts of Conscience, and all of them unavoidable.

1. *Directive*, as to that which is to be done, it being the Law written in the heart, it points to all the duties & sins, whereby that Law is kept or broken; warning from the one, and putting off to the other. *Gen.* 39. 9. *How shall I do this, and sin?* &c. Psl 119. 59. *I considered my ways, and turned my feet into thy testimonies.* Thus Conscience is a Monitor.

2. *Reflexive*, both *gratulatory* and *reprehensive*, as to all that which is doing or done.

1. Considering, observing, and recording, whether it be done or no; the matter of fact simply, with the natural circumstances of action, Negative and Positive, both in the point of Omission and Commission. *Item*, this is done, or not done.

2. Taking notice, and recording the quality of the Fact in a comparative act; comparing it with the Rule, together with the moral Circumstances thereof: Thus Conscience is a Surveyor, Witness, Register. *Item*. In the doing or omitting of this and this, the Law is broken, and the forfeiture and penalty is incurred.

3. It applies this, and sets it home upon the sinner, thou art the Man. This thou hast done, verily thou art guilty, *&c.* Thus Conscience is a Judge also, and gives Sentence touching both the sin and sinner, *pro* or *con*, as the case is.

4. It never leaves, nor gives over these acts of warning, observing, record-

recording, witnessing and judging, till judgment take place, and the Law and Sentence be fulfilled upon the sinner. Verily, I am guilty, *&c.* Thus Conscience is Tormentor and Executioner also, executing its own Sentence, by affecting the heart, and moving the affections, as of joy and boldness, if the Case be good; so of horrour and fear, shame and sorrow, if the Case be bad, *&c.*

Now these acts of Conscience, though haply for a time suspended, as it were, are unavoidable, upon a double account: And Conscience cannot be bribed.

1. Because of that relation that Conscience hath to God; it ever takes God's part, and God it's; it is God's Deputy, and Viceroy; and so its Voice and Judgment, is the very Voice and Judgment of God himself; who can and will maintain it in its office, till he brings forth Judgment unto Victory.

2. Because of its relation to a mans self; it is, *Sensus & præjudicium Judicii Divini.* Nothing so intimate to a man, and inseparable from life, as this Bosom-Judge, and God's Court within a man, 'tis a part of a mans Soul and self, as subordinate to God and his Judgment; so that if a man can run away from God, or himself, then he may escape the reflection of his sin upon him; but if not, then know, it must be an evil and bitter thing, that thou hast departed from God in any known sin, either to thy penitent amendment, or penal condemnation and confusion, and that upon all accounts. 1. In respect of God. 2. Of Sin. 3. Of the sinner himself. *Jer.* 2. 19. *Thine own wickedness shall reprove thee; thine own iniquity shall correct thee.* All the time thou abidest in sin, thou art gathering either Hemlock to poyson thee; or Wormwood to make thy life bitter. Jer. 2. 19.

Use 1. Instruction: 1. See then the malignity and danger of sin. Fools make a mock of sin.

2. See the vanity, sinfulness, and desperate danger of presuming upon any bottom of peace and satisfaction, or security, whilst sin remains: Of a truth, thy peace and hope thereof, shall be as a Spiders Web, and as the giving up of the Ghost; and thy presumption must end in despair. Bribest thou thy self with a perswasion of peace, presuming and leaning,

1. Upon Gods Patience? Remember, forbearance is no payment, or forgiveness, nor sigh thereof.

2. Upon outward Priviledges? *Matth.* 7. 21. God knows thee not, whilst thou art a worker of iniquity.

3. Upon the Mercy of God? He is Holy, and therefore must be

just; and because just, angry; and because angry, ever angry, unless Christ be thy Peace upon Faith, and a through change.

4. The Blood of Christ? though it be an Ocean, yet not a drop of it can do thee good, unless it turn thee from all thine iniquity, *Acts* 3. 21. all this is but Physick in thy Pocket.

5. The Promises of the Gospel? They are sweet, but Poyson to the impenitent? as Bread to a dying man.

6. Upon thy Faith in all this? whilst impenitent, all's but notional and imaginary, and so thy peace and happiness is but a notion.

Use 2. 2. Therefore be exhorted to get thy sin off.

I shall here do two things, 1. Give you some directions how to put you in the way to escape this doom. 2. To awaken my self and you to the serious use of them by some Motives.

1. Then if you ask how? I answer,

Direct. 1. 1. Attend to, and comply with, the Word and Spirit therein, in summoning thy self to God's and thine own Bar of Conscience; suffer thy self to be stopt, as a loose and skulking Malefactor; seize and sequester thy self to hearken to the Call and Treaty of the Word about thy condition; the *Hue and Cry* of the Word is after thee to apprehend thee.

Direct. 2. 2. Let inquisition and diligent search be made into the matters between God and thy Soul; This is the way, *Lam.* 3. 20. *Let us search our ways, and turn*, &c. this the miscarriage, *Jer.* 8. 6. *No man considered, and said, what have I done.* The first step to Peace with God, is Enquiry, *Isa.* 21. 12. *If ye will enquire, Enquire, Return, Come.*

Direct. 3. 3. Declare against thy self, turn God's faithful Pleader against thy own Soul; accuse thy self in free and particular confession, whereof thou art guilty, with all the killing Circumstances thou canst find out. This will prevent the Accuser of the Brethren.

Direct. 4. 4. Condemn thy self, charge thy self with Fault, Guilt, Punishment, *Lev.* 26. 41. *So shalt thou prevent the Condemnation of the Lord*, though

1 Cor. 11. 31. thou canst not satisfie the Justice of God in the least, yet thou must glorifie it to the utmost thou canst.

Direct. 5. 5. Be thorow, and to purpose, and constant herein; for if thy sense of thy condition be not real, thy cure will not be real; there will be no more reality in the application of the Word for the one, than there is for the other; to no more purpose wilt thou apply the Word to thy self, than thou applyest thy self to the Word; therefore give thy self to it, to dwell upon thy Case; hold the Object close to the Faculty, till it make some impression, and thy heart yeeld.

6. Fly

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6. Fly to the Lord Jesus, and the Mercy-seat in his Blood, 1. For Repentance. 2. For remission. He is exalted to give both, *Acts* 5. 31. None can take up the quarrel between God and thee, save onely Christ alone; he, he is the Way; God's way to thee for Grace and Mercy, and thy way to God for Faith. Lord, I am a guilty helpless Creature, but thou hast laid help upon one that is mighty to save, from the utmost to the utmost. *Direct.* 6. 1 Sam. 2. 25.

7. In him therefore cry to God for Mercy and Grace with thy whole heart, O mercy, mercy Lord; I have wronged thee, Lord forgive me; I have defiled my Soul, Lord wash me; I have wounded and cast away my Soul, Lord heal me, Lord save me, *&c.* *Direct.* 7. Psal. 51.

8. Cry for Mercy, till God have mercy upon thee, *Psal.* 123. 2, 3. Take heed thou be not temporary for a fit, but set thy self in an habitual tenour, restless after Interest in Christ, and the great Work, till it be done. *Direct.* 8.

9. Accept of Christ upon the terms of the Gospel, not thine own, or picking and chusing, but as he; *Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?* Consent and resign thy self, stooping to his Articles of Peace; to deny thy self of the dearest, bear the heaviest, do the strictest, as he shall call; not that thou canst do any thing, but upon these terms; If he will receive thee, and furnish thee with Grace, thou wilt follow, and cleave to him with full purpose of heart. *Direct.* 9. Acts 9. 6.

10. Cashier and discharge in thy purpose, and endeavour in dependance on this Christ in the Promise, what-ever thou knowest offends in heart and life, what-ever belongs to a carnal mind, which is enmity to God, and addict thy self to the pleasure of God in all known commands, and what-ever favours of the Spirit, and the Kingdom of God. *Direct.* 10.

11. Upon these terms, consenting to imbrace Christ in the offer of Grace, rest upon Christ, who is assuredly thine, and will never be otherwise. *Direct.* 11.

2. The Motives. 1. The comfort of this way. 1. *Now then there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ, &c. their iniquities shall never be remembred:* God sees no iniquity in *Jacob*, there's no fury in God. *O! blessed is the man to whom God imputes not his sin, &c.* Now Christ is *Jehovah*, thy Righteousness. Thy Judge is thy Advocate, thy God reconciled. Thy Comforter is come to apply Christ in all that he is for thee, to thee, and shall abide for ever with thee; he is thy Seal unto the purchased Possession, the Law is satisfied, the Curse is removed, all the Promises thine, and the Spirit of Promise to confirm thy title *Motive* 1. Rom. 8. 1. Psal. 32.

ticle thine, the stain or mark of sin washed off quite, as to Justification and present Acceptation; and in part begun as to Sanctification and purity of heart and life. Thy Conscience is pacified with *the blood of sprinkling*, as to what the Word declares concerning thee, though not as to what thou feelest; and where the Judge acquits, there Conscience, which is the Sergeant, cannot condemn; but that 'tis not always set right according to the Word.

Motive 2. The terror of being yet, and going on in sin.

2. But oh! the terror of having sin upon the file against us; and dost thou remain in sin unrepented? Dost thou go on to add sin to sin, not caring how many sins thou loadest thy Conscience withal, as if there were no time of reckoning? Numb. 32. 23. *Be ye sure your sins will find you out.*

Sic mihi semper contingat tractare & bear amicos, non dulcibus verbis, sed suis terroribus. Bern.

Do not say, *Hast thou found me, O my enemy?* Or as the wicked one, *Art thou come to torment us before our time?* But as thou lovest thy Soul, take all I say in good part, for God knows I speak out of tender respect to your eternal good. Consider then,

1. The innumerable number of sins thou standest guilty of, *Psal.* 19. 12. *Who knows the errors of his life?* Methinks there is no sad sight in the World but the sinner in his sins.

Suppose you had seen *Herod* covered over with Worms; alas what is this to one Worm of Conscience?

Suppose you had seen every Member in the Senate run upon *Cæsar* to give him a stab, would not you have given him over for dead a thousand times? Brethren, every sin you commit, is an envenomed Knife to stab you at your very heart.

Suppose, again, you should see a Malefactor at the Bar for a Capital Crime, the Evidence clear, O! you will say, 'Twil go hard with him; but when you see another, and another, and many other Indictments sworn home against him, and every one touching his life, will you not say, There is no hope, he is a dead man, and all the World cannot save him? Remember, this is thy case, and it will be certainly called over.

If one Poyson be enough to dispatch a man without an Antidote, what doth that man mean, that drinks off a thousand Poysons, and refuses the Antidote of the Blood of Christ?

If one sin be as a thousand Mill-stones to sink all the World into the bottom of Hell, what dost thou mean to tie so many thousand Mill-stones about thy own neck?

2. Old Debts vex most, the delay of payment increases them by Use upon Use; and the return of them being unexpected, a person is least provided for them. We count old Sores breaking forth, incurable. *Inve-*

veterati

guſtus wondered at a perſons ſleeping quietly that was very much in debt, and ſent for his Pillow; ſaying, *Surely there is ſome ſtrange vertue in it, that makes him reſt ſo ſecure.* My Brethren, if one Debt unto God's Law be more than the whole Creation can ſatisfie, what do any of us mean to reſt ſecure with ſo vaſt a burden upon our Conſciences and account? O! take heed thou beeſt not ſurpriſed and arreſted with old Debts. O! *thou remembreſt not former iniquities againſt us.* Pſal. 79. 8.

3. God will call over, and charge thy ſins upon thee, when all the ſweet is gone; Thou makeſt a ſhift to ſwallow the Hook with pleaſure, when 'tis covered with the ſweet Bait; O! but when that's digeſted, or diſgorged, and the naked Hook piercing and raking thy heart, what wilt thou do then? O! how bitter is the Pill when all the Sugar is melted off. Now this will be thy caſe; Job found but a taſte of it, and O! how he cries out, Job 13. 26. *Thou writeſt bitter things againſt me, &c. bitterneſſes.*

4. With old ſins muſt come old wrath. Rom. 2. 4, 5. *Thinkeſt thou that thou ſhalt eſcape the judgment of God? or, deſpiſeſt the riches of his goodneſs and forbearance, not knowing that the goodneſs of God* (doth not only give thee a ſpace of, but) *leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardneſs and impenitent heart, treaſureſt* (tunneſt) *up againſt thy ſelf, wrath againſt the day of wrath, &c.*

There be three ſorts and degrees of Wrath will come with old ſins.

1. Wrath for old ſins.
2. Wrath for the forbearance of that Wrath.
3. Wrath for the abuſe of that forbearance: O! what wilt thou do in the day of thy viſitation?

5. The former admonitions, &c. nips of Conſcience, will come again, and they with the preſent will be unſufferable, beyond all that can be expreſſed: This is their terror here, ſay they, *He ſpake, &c. and we would not hear*; and ſaith *Reuben*, *Said I not to you*, did I not tell you, warn you what it would come to, and ye would not hear? O! he which hardens his neck to reproof, ſhall ſurely be deſtroyed. O! timely, and fair checks and warnings, obſtinately rejected, are the wracks of Conſcience, the ſharp ſting and teeth of the Worm thereof.

6. And what will now become of thee! as the Lord lives, thou wilt come to thy diſtracting, miſgiving thoughts, *Yea, but, and verily we are guilty*, &c. Methinks, ſaith *Luther*, every cloud is lin'd with thunder againſt me: Thou wilt take every viſitation from God, as a Meſſenger of Death; nay, that God himſelf ſets in againſt thy life. Suppoſe you ſaw two deſperate enemies grapling, cloſing in upon each other; O! ſay

say you, they are armed with some instruments of death, they owe each other a deadly grudge; there is of old a mortal feud between them, they'l take this opportunity to vent their malice to the utmost, O! one of them will fall and die for it. My Brethren, God and the sinner in his sins, are according to the tenour of this Book, enemies, hated of, and hating one another; and when God visits sin upon him, he falls upon him, and deals with him, (as I may say) hand to hand, and now one of them must go to the Walls, God or the sinner must fall: Take it in Gods own Challenge, *Ezek.* 22. 14. In *vers.* 13. God complains the sinner had given him a blow; but then, saith God, Canst thou indeed make thy part good when I shall be in good earnest with thee? *Can thy heart hold out? can thine hands be strong in the day that I shall deal with thee?* O! consider and tremble at it, how God will thus deal with thee, and how infinitely, thou being a guilty worm, art over-matcht by Omnipotency, whose wrath will one day wax hot against thee, even to the utmost. *Psal.* 39. 11. O! saith *David*, *When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty*, even all his hopes and desires, *to consume away as a moth*, &c.

Sad was the case of the Children of *Benjamin*, of whom we read, *Judg.* 20. they had fought against their Brethren twice, and prevailed; they ventured out the third time, but then the Battle went against them, the Ambuscadoes cut them off, and others fired the Town behind them; O! the horrour and amazement they were struck withal, when they could not stand before the face of the Tribes which were before them, and they saw their City all on a flame behind them; O! said they, *Now is evil befallen us, and they were troden down as dirt.* Thou wretch, which art still in thy sins, hast fought against God many & many times, and seemed to carry the day; but when God shall come upon thee in his strength, and thou shalt see all the refuge of Creature Comforts in despairing case, as on a fire behind thee, what reprobate astonishment will then take hold on thee? now comes thy distracting, misgiving, despairing thoughts! now evil is befallen me! now is God come upon me, and will make an end of me at once! now come the floods of my ungodliness in amain, and the flood-gates of Gods wrath are opened upon me; *Now the Arrows of the Almighty stick fast in me, and the poison thereof drink up my spirit, and the terrors of God set themselves in array against me*, Job 6. 4. and as the Church, *Lam.* 2. 22. Now hath God summoned (and mustered) as in a solemn day of battel between him and my poor soul, my terrors round about me! O! you that have been twenty, thirty, forty, fifty years, even ever since you were born, a provocation,

vocation, and yet also *forget God: Consider these things before he fall upon you, and tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver*; for assure your selves, there is a time when God will call over sins past, and charge them home upon the Conscience. Psal. 50.22.

Q. But you will ask, *What is the sign, and when shall these things be?* Quest.

A. I answer: The God of Spirits can at any time, and will in his own time certainly fall upon thy Spirit with horrour and confusion; especially and usually at these particular Instants: *Answ.* Deut. 32.

1. After a certain term of Patience abused and expired. God is patient toward all men, and this patience is as the banks which keep in his wrath, that it breaks not in upon thee, but 'twill not be alwayes so; these banks have their bounds, and as thy sin abides, it rises with thee, and as Gods wrath abides on thee it rises with God, till at last it swels up to the bank of his patience, and then it is a thousand times more dreadful than the Sea to overwhelm thee. Gods Patience and thy respite hath its date, *Gen.* 6. 3. one hundred and twenty years, and then — So it may be so many years, or months, or weeks, or dayes to thee, and then — *Læsa patientia fit furor*; and as Lead, the colder, when Cold, the hotter when Hot. * *Tarditatem vindicta compensat gravitate supplici.* Amos 6. 3. Mat. 24. 48, 50

2. When the sinner is secure; the less fear the more danger; the more thou putt'st the evil day from thee, the nearer it is to thee, God shall cut thee off in an hour when thou art not aware; when thou sayest, *my Master delays his coming.* As the Flood came upon the old World, as * some say in the Spring, or Summer, when they would least have dreamed of it. God deals with a sinner, as *Samuel* with *Agag*; when he said, *Surely the bitterness of death is past*, then comes the messenger of death from the Lord to cut him in peices. 1 *Thes* 5. 3. *When the wicked cry Peace, peace* (nothing but peace) *then comes sudden destruction upon them, as travel upon a woman*, &c. Dost thou bless thy self in thy sins, as if thy condition were good, or thy account far off? *as the Lord lives there is but a step between thee and death.* * Musculus *in* Gen. 1 Sam. 1. 32, 33. Deut. 29. 19.

3. After the commission of some great sin; this like some great blow, which awakens the Conscience to see the whole account; as in *Cain*, *Judas*, &c. God deals with the Sinner, as *Solomon* with *Shimei*: he reviled his Father *David*, but *David* seems to forget it, and so did his Son *Solomon*, only he is bound by an Oath not to go out of *Jerusalem*; he breaks his Oath and goes out, *Solomon* upon this comes upon him for the breach of his Covenant and Oath; and also for former Rebellions, *And I remember*, saith he, *what thou didst to my Father David.* 1 King. 2. 44.

4. On thy death-bed (not to speak of Judgement when we must

Gen. 3. 8. account for every particular) God comes to the ſinner (as to *Adam* in the cool of the day) in his cold ſweat, when his Sun is ſetting, and he is going to make his bed in the dark; his Life and Soul ſits on his pale trembling lips, ready to take her flight into Eternity, and whereas thou wert before, as the *deaf Adder*, or the *wild Aſs ſnuffing up the wind*, or the *Dromedary traverſing his way*, without all regard of any check, now, taken in thy mouth; Oh! my contempt of the means of Grace; Oh! my prophaning Sabbaths, Sacraments; Oh! my breaking bonds of Oaths, Covenants, Promiſes, and caſting away Cords of Diſcipline and Government; Oh! my malice againſt Gods People; Oh! my hardening my heart againſt the Word and the Rod, *&c.* as the rankling thorn in the fleſh pains moſt when thou goeſt to bed.

5. Before this, in a time of outward Calamity and Diſtreſs, and this is the ſecond Doctrine from the ſpecial Circumſtance, when they were troubled, *And now.*

Direct. 2. 2. This inward horrour and trouble of mind falls in (even to Gods People) with outward Trouble.

This is the Caſe here, the Patriarchs (the Children of the Promiſe) are in diſtreſs and danger, by their Brother *Joſeph*'s ſeeming ſeverity toward them. *And they ſaid one to the other, We are verily guilty*, &c. with the preſſure on the outward man, comes a ſnare upon the Conſcience.

If any find it otherwiſe, (as there are ſome, with whom when there is a ſtorm without, there is a calm within, and when a ſtorm within, there is a calm without) let them bleſs God; but in the experience of Gods People, it is often found, that when their outward condition is troubled, their inward ſtate and frame is full of perplexities and fears.

David found it ſo, *Pſal.* 116. 3. *The ſorrows of death compaſſed me*, and (then alſo) *the pains of hell got hold on me, I found trouble and ſorrow*, *i.e.* very much perplexity both inward and outward at once. So again, *Pſal.* 31. 22. *In my haſte* (i. e. when I was flying for my life before the face of *Saul*, and hard put to it) *then I ſaid, I am cut off from before thine eyes.* Thus it was with *Jona*, chap. 2. 4. in the depth of his diſtreſs, ſaith he, *I am caſt out of thy ſight*; ſad concluſions! touching not only Gods providential care over them, but his love towards them. Thus with *Paul*, 2 Cor. 7. 5. *without were fightings, within were fears*, *i. e.* Spiritual conflicts.

1 Sam. 23. 26. *Pſal.* 42. 7.

We find the whole Church in the *Lamentations* at the ſame paſs, *Lam.* 3. 17, 18. *Thou haſt removed my Soul far from Peace; I ſaid, my ſtrength and*

and my hope is perished from the Lord: alike sad is that Swoon of *Israel's* Faith, when they were in the Captivity, *Ezek.* 37. 11.

You'l ask what the reason and cause of this should be?

1. It ariseth from their ignorance, especially in the fundamental Points of Religion, as touching our disease, and the remedy, and way of cure, the tenour of the Covenant of Grace, according to which God exactly proceeds in all his dealings with us; and we should ever carry it towards God. If a man be taken with a fit of sickness; knows not what he ails, nor what to take, nor how to apply that which is prescribed, nor how to order himself; is unsatisfied touching the way, skill and faithfulness of his Physitian, by his ignorance he is put to a sad plunge, and at his wits ends, ready to sink and welter; thus 'tis in our Spiritual condition: *David*, Psal. 73. 12, 16. is dangerously tossed in his Spirit upon waves of temptations, and much staggered about his condition, his feet were almost gone, he almost wrackt, and cast away. See the reason, *ver.* 22. of *Psal.* 73. *So foolish was I and ignorant*: ignorance is darkness, 'twill either find fears, or make them. *Reas.* 1.

2. This ariseth from the ill and impudent carnal management of a more prosperous state; 'tis rare to receive much of this World, and not as the Prodigal to go a far off; 'tis hard to keep close to God in prosperity, when we have much of this World to live upon, and content our selves with: to live upon God, and make him our content and stay, as if we had no other life nor livelyhood but in him; we are very apt in such a case to contract a carnal frame, let go our hold of God, discustom our selves to the exercise of Faith, abate and estrange our affections from God. See how it was with *David*, Psal. 30. 7. *I said I should never be moved, thou hast made my mountain so strong.* I solaced my self in these outward accommodations, as if I needed no other support, strength, or content, and there were no fear of a change; no care now to make God my constant joy and stay, and reckon upon God only for my portion, and that I must follow him with a Cross, and be conformed to my Saviour in being crucified to the World; what comes of this, *v.* 7. *Thou hidest thy face, and I was troubled, viz.* because he had too much indulged a life of sence. Children that are held up by their Nurses hand, and mind not to feel their feet and ground; when the Nurses let them go, they fall as if they had no feet or ground to stand upon. Or thus: we are like Children, which playing in the golden Sun-shine, and following their sport, stray so far from their Fathers house, that night coming upon them ere they are aware, they are as it were lost, and full of fears, not knowing how to recover home; *Reas.* 2. *Luke* 15. 12, 13.

the World ſteals away our hearts from God, gives ſo few opportunities for the exerciſe of the life of faith, and ſuch advantages to a life of ſence, wears off the ſence of our dependance on God, and need thereof; ſo that when we are put to it by affliction, we are ready to miſcarry, ere we can recover our weapon, or hold. Faith is our Cordial, *Pſal.* 27. 13. now if it be not at hand (as in health when we have no need of it, it uſe to be) we may faint ere we recover the uſe of it.

3. 3. It ariſeth from the ſhortneſs and dimneſs of our Spiritual Evidences. Our Evidences you know are great matters in point of eſtate, and livelyhood; and in affliction we are put to prove them; at which time if they be either not clear, or not at hand, we are at a great loſs and plunge. A good man makes always conſcience of *making his calling and election ſure*, but he is eſpecially put upon this work in affliction, then he conſiders, then ſearches more than in his ordinary courſe. Afflictions are as ſharp, ſearching, winter-weather, will ſearch whether your houſe be tight or no; thoſe garments, walls and windows that will ſerve in ſummer of proſperity, will be found defective in winter of adverſity; then how ſtands the caſe between God and me, what ground of my confidence, what evidence that I am in Chriſt, *&c.* Though the leaſt degree of Faith will ſave the houſe from falling, yet 'twill be a poor cold uncomfortable dwelling in winter, unleſs you mend the cracks, and flaws to defend you againſt driving piercing winds and ſtorms.

4. 4. It ariſeth, as it did here, from the remembrance of ſome ſin unmortified, and therefore it may be, for ought we know, unpardoned. Affliction puts upon the remembrance of ſin with more circumſtances and aggravations, and to more purpoſe than ordinarily, even the beſt (which make moſt conſcience hereof) attend to it in time of freedom; *Job* 36. 8, 9, 10. *If they be bound in fetters, and held in the cords of affliction, then he ſhews them their work, and their tranſgreſſions wherein they have exceeded*; 1 King. 17. 18. *Doſt thou come to call my ſin to remembrance in ſlaying* (afflicting me with the loſs of) *my ſon?*

In ſtormy change of Weather, when Clouds gather black over us, and it begins to drop; then we feel it in our bones, what bruiſes or aches we have gotten. When a Man is arreſted by one Creditor, all his Debts come in upon him. Even ſo when a Man is arreſted with Sickneſs, or ſome other outward diſtreſs, then come in upon him the Debts, wherein he is bound over unto the Divine Law: when all is well with us, we can eaſily caſt theſe Debts on the ſcore of Chriſt, but now 'tis hot work. Affliction is the Glaſs of Sin, and the opening and awakening the Conſcience to ſee it, and thence comes the Trouble upon

upon the Spirit; It is not all the ſtormy Winds upon the face of the Earth, but ſome generated in the bowels thereof which makes the earth ſhake.

5. It ari'eth from Satan. When the eye of Conſcience is moſt open, he is moſt buſie to preſent, either that which may cloſe it, or that which may trouble it; when the heart is moſt tender, he is moſt ready to bruiſe and wound it. In affliction he would make breaches between God and us, us and God, and us and our ſelves, (if we muſt needs be ſenſible of them) gulphs out of which there is no redemption; he tempts us unto ſin in proſperity, and then for ſin in adverſity, as we find in *Jobs* Caſe, even in thoſe which he knows are out of his reach, (where leaſt ſtrength and ground to do any thing there;) he is moſt malicious, as it appears in his bold attemps upon our Lord: If he cannot run thee upon a Rock, yet he will diſquiet thee with a Tempeſt; if he cannot rob thee of thy Grace, yet he will of thy Peace and Comfort. *Reaſ. 5.*

6. It ariſeth from the weakneſs of Faith, and ſtrength of Senſe, apprehending God in affliction as our enemy, eſpecially if there be ſome willing correſpondence between us and any thing which God hates, God is a terror to us. Thus Senſe wrought in *Job* 33. 10. *Behold, he findeth occaſion againſt me, he counteth me for his enemy.* (Alſo chap. 16. 12, 14.) and in the Church. *Lam.* 2. 4, 5. *God hath bent his bow like an enemy*, &c. and *verſ.* 5. Oh! if thou comeſt to that of *Jacob*, *Gen.* 42. 36. *Surely all theſe things are againſt me*, and in them God againſt me, it is ſad with thee. This is the triumph of Faith, *If God be with us, who can be againſt us?* This the ſhreek of thy Fainting, *God is againſt me; and then who can be for me?* *Reaſ. 6.*

7. It ariſeth from Gods withdrawing. Thus with Chriſt; when God would make his condition ſad, and his burden heavy indeed, the Father, and his own Divinity withdraw, and withhold their comfortable influential preſence from the apprenſion of the Humane Nature; and when was he thus ſpiritually afflicted? But when moſt outward trouble came upon him, when his Murderers and the Traytor were upon him, and his life drew near to the grave, as it was prefigured in *David*, when the ſorrows or dangers of death compaſſed him about, then the terrors of Hell took hold upon him, (*i. e.*) terrors ariſing from this, the withdrawing of the Divine Love and Countenance. Now come his aſtoniſhing, diſmaying fears and ſorrows, preſſing even to death, making him as it were to ſhrink from the great work of his own mercy. Now he cries out as his Type, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* The perpetual ſhreek of them which are caſt away. When we can with *David* Pſal. 116. 3. Mark 1. Pſal. 22. Matth. 27.

1 *Sam.* 30. 6. *David* encourage our selves in our relations to, and interest in God, then every, even the heaviest burden, even death it self, is light, and we can in Christs strength shake it off, or run away with it, as *Sampson* with the Gates of the City. But, as when the Sun is down or eclipsed, the flowers fold up and droop; or, when the Face before the Glass turns away, the Face in it vanisheth: Even so when God hides his Face, and we doubt of our Title and Interest, we are troubled; and then we are as *Sampson* when his Covenant broken, and his locks, the sign thereof, cut; we are as other men, our strength is gone, any cord will bind us, any burden sink us, *Isa.* 64. 7.

Reas. 8. 8. I might add, it may arise from our disaquaintedness with afflictions, as to our expectation and resolution. But for Use.

1. A word to them which are yet in their sins out of Christ; And it is, 1. Of Conviction. 2. Counsel.

1. Conviction, and terrour to them which are out of Christ. If Gods People be liable to inward and outward trouble at once, wherein yet there is not a drop of wrath; What shall the visitation of the rest be wherein there is not a drop of saving pity? If they may be so hardly put to it which yet are ever secretly and mightily supported, what shall they do that have no strength but their own to bear up under the mighty hand of God? Surely if they smart sevenfold, the wicked must be avenged seventy times sevenfold. If the cup of affliction, by reason of the bitter ingredient of inward perplexity, be so bitter to them; what becomes of them for whom the dregs of that Cup are reserved? The godly may stand condemned at their own Bar, but the wicked at Gods too, and nothing remains to them but a certain expectation of execution without a change. Oh! if *Jacob* halt, sure *Esaus* back and bones must be broken; If the righteous be (by reason of sharp afflictions within and without) scarcely saved, (to whom yet all afflictions are through grace ever sufferable, short, and sanctified) where shall the sinner appear when his sins and sorrows shall meet together? There be three days wherein thou shalt never be able to hold up thy head, and yet thou must appear: First, A day of extream Calamity; Secondly, of Death; Thirdly, of Judgement. Oh! remember how sad it goes with the Godly in a day of outward Calamity, because of inward trouble joyning with it, through gradual want of Knowledge, Faith, and Evidence, the venom of sin unmortified, malice of Satan not yet quite troden under their feet, and the withdrawing of Gods Grace and Countenance in part. And consider how thou wilt speed, which hast no saving Knowledge, no Faith, no Interest, are under the raign of Sin and Satan, whom the holy and jealous

jealous God cannot endure to behold but with revenge and execration. *Pſal.* 27.13. *David* had fainted (in his affliction) had he not believed, *&c.* Surely then thou muſt utterly faint, becauſe thou haſt not obtained an heart to underſtand and believe to this day: The Children of God, notwithſtanding all their inward and outward preſſures, can ſay, as *Paul* ſighs for them all, 2 *Cor.* 4. 8, 9. *We are troubled on every ſide, yet not diſtreſſed,* (ſo as there is no way to eſcape or bear up); *We are perplexed, but not in deſpair; perſecuted, but not forſaken; caſt down, but not quite deſtroyed.* But if thou lookeſt not to it betimes, ſuch a day will come upon thee, wherein thou ſhalt be ſo ſet with trouble, that thou wilt be abſolutely concluded and ſhut out from all relief; ſo perplexed, that thou wilt deſpair; ſo purſued (by the avengers of blood) that thou wilt be quite forſaken of Heaven and Earth; ſo caſt down, that thou wilt be utterly deſtroyed and daſh'd in pieces. Oh! if trouble, ſuch trouble, may ſeize on God's dear ones, what reprobate fear and aſtoniſhment ſhall take hold on thee that art a ſtranger, a ſlave, an enemy, and yet ſecure and preſumptuous in that condition!

2. It is a word of Counſel to thee, as to be an alarm to thy ſecurity, ſo an Antidote to thy preſumption and cenſoriouſneſs in reference to the godly. The men of the world can eaſily paſs over the beams of raging wickedneſs in themſelves and their own, but they maliciouſly and proudly aggravate the motes of infirmity in the godly. If they carry themſelves unbecomingly by any impatience under the hand of God; now they are Hypocrites preſently, now they ſink, notwithſtanding they would ſeem to have ſpecial intereſt in, and acquaintance with God to bear them up. Thus was *Job* cenſured, even by his friends, for which God cenſures them, and that with wrath, *Job* 42.7. Thus Gods People ſerve themſelves, but eſpecially they have this meaſure from the men of the World: They ſee them drop and walk heavily under ſome outward burden, which they think is but ordinary; they ſee them faint, having drunk of the cup of affliction which is common, but alas they conſider not what may be (the weight of their burden) within, what bitter ingredients may be in their Cup, as to their inward man. Now the Spirit is the man, the mind is the ſtrength, and they are not aware how tender the love of God hath made that, and how grieved and broken that may be upon ſome ſpiritual account between God and them. *Joab* reproves *David* for mourning ſo exceſſively for *Abſolom*, (and at firſt ſight we may think it ſtrange that ſo eminent a Saint as *David* ſhould ſo take on for an outward loſs, more, as it ſeems, than for the loſs of Gods Favor and Grace) but *Joab* did not know and conſider what viſitation there

there might be within *David*, while God ſtood over him with that outward rod; how God might ſet on that outward blow with ſome inward ſmart, and rebuke upon his Spirit in ſuch an intimation as this, Oh! *David*, thou that wert ſo obliged to me more than thouſands, I'll make thee know 'tis an evil and bitter thing to provoke me, and diſhonour my Name as thou haſt done, thy Child is dead, *Abſolom* is gone with a Curſe, and *Adonijah* ſhall follow, and now what haſt thou gotten by hearkening to temptations, and pleaſing thy ſelf in the enticements of thy naughty heart? No queſtion but there were ſome ſuch workings of Gods diſpleaſure within him, and therefore no wonder he took on ſo heavily, as *Pſal.* 39. 11. therefore do not paſs ſentence upon the Godly in their extremities till thou canſt hear and ſee all the bitterneſs of their Condition.

Uſe. 2. 2. The ſecond word is to the Godly. 1. They which are not, but may be beſet with this double perplexity. 2. They which are.

1. *Art thou in a ſtate of freedom and exemption? bleſs God; thy lot is very comfortable, but be not ſecure, indulge not thy ſelf with a perſwaſion that it will always laſt.* For

1. Thou haſt married Chriſt with his Croſs, or not at all; thou art delivered from the Curſe indeed, but thou art appointed to the Croſs, and canſt not with integrity except any part thereof, that without or that within.

2. Outward afflictons and troubles may be many, and heavy, one upon the neck of another, and by reaſon of them though they come ſingle, thou mayeſt endure an hard brunt, and have enough to exerciſe thy whole ſtrength of Faith, and Patience.

3. Inward Affliction may come, and that's far more heavy and grievous, the Soul is infinitely more tender than the Body, and yet ſcalding water upon the eye, can very hardly be endured. *O then! a wounded ſpirit, who can bear that?*

4. 'Tis not improbable, nor unuſual, that both theſe Rods may come upon thee at once, and then thy affliction is a load upon a broken back; now thou wilt have thy hands full indeed, and very hardly be ſaved; now thou wilt need not onely all the ſtrength which thou haſt, but all which thou mightſt have had.

2. You'l ſay, *Sirs, what ſhall we do?*

I anſwer, (as in natural diſtempers) 1. You muſt take ſome Preparatives and Prophulacticks, to prevent the Diſeaſe if it may be, or at leaſt to break the ſtrength of it, if it doth come, that we may not ſink under it.

2. Some

2. Some Cordials, Reſtoratives, and Therapeuticks for the Cure of the malady when it is come; I ſhall endeavour by the Grace of God to help you in theſe two caſes and conclude.

1. Then for Direction by way of Preparation. *Direct.* 1.

1. Labour to be well ſeen in points of ſaving knowledge, eſpecially Fundamentals. Ignorance I told you was the cauſe of ſoul-diſtreſs, and it is ſo: the impregnable impediment of comfort moſt-what in the Godly; they are not throughly informed, they do not underſtand themſelves well in the matter of the Covenant of Grace, the Doctrine, Way, Benefit, Terms of it, and the miſtakes about it; if they were clear in theſe things, they would have a fairer way to comfort, and more eaſily go to the wells of Salvation to draw water of life at any, even the darkeſt time; our Saviour preſcribes this receipt in *John* 16.33. *Theſe things have I told you*, &c. (*viz.* the great things of the Goſpel, ſuch as thoſe, *verſ.* 28. *That I came from the Father, i. e.* to purchaſe all; *and I go to the Father, i. e.* to procure and apply all) theſe things ſay the Diſciples thou haſt ſpoken plainly, thou haſt given us clear evidence and full information of theſe, &c. points of knowledge: And what advantage did Chriſts teaching and their learning and underſtanding of theſe great matters tend to? *That in me ye might have Peace*, (when) *in the World ye ſhall have Tribulation.* Chriſt had promiſed he would not leave them comfortleſs, *John* 14. 18. and this is the courſe he takes, and the way he puts the Diſciples into, to prevent or prepare for Tribulation, that it might not ſpoil them of their inward Peace, *viz.* Inſtruction and Knowledge. O! the Lord give you with utmoſt diligence to follow on to know, and to work in what you know into your hearts; So ſhall you have that within you, which (in dependence on Chriſt in the many points well underſtood) will be of ſingular uſe and advantage, to quiet and compoſe your Spirits in all your Troubles and Languiſhments; grounds of knowledge are grounds of ſupport and comfort.

2. In order to the forenamed ſecond cauſe of this diſtemper, be ſure you be cloſe with, and often taking hold on God by renewed acts of Faith. My Brethren, Faith is not to be acted only at firſt, for our entrance into the State of Grace, but 'tis our duty and wiſdom, to carry on the exerciſe of Faith for our continuance, and progreſs in that ſtate and paſſage through all thoſe Temptations, Difficulties, Oppoſitions, Diſcouragements we are to meet withal therein: Faith and Prayer muſt be as the breathing of our Souls in and out, to keep the heart in life: *the Juſt ſhall live* (*i. e.* every part, degree, and act of life) *by his* *Direct.* 2.

Faith; this again is the order the great Phiſitian of our Souls preſcribes, *John* 14. 1. *Let not your hearts be troubled*; why how ſhall they prevent or help it? *believe*! they were Believers already. Oh! but they muſt ſtill in reference to every change and condition, or occaſion of life, eſpecially in order to this, that they may not be troubled in trouble, that the ſtorm get not into their hearts, to ſhake and ſhatter them within, they muſt believe, *i. e.* they muſt be much in the acting and exerciſing of Faith, upon the grounds thereof; 'tis ſad that I ſhall now ſay: We come to ſome Chriſtians in their dumps and deſpondencies, ſhew them the Promiſe, Chriſt in it, the way to it: they are ſo to ſeek, that they ſcarce know what we mean; we are as *Barbarians* to them, they are ready to faint under our hand, before we can (as it were) ſtanch their bleeding, or apply any Plaiſter, or Cordial, or make them underſtand their way and ground of ſupport and comfort, and all this for want of uſe and exerciſe of Faith; the acting of any faculty (where life is not come to the declining ſtate, as it never fares with the life of Grace) ſtrengthens that faculty; and that perſon can readily, even in the dark, go to his Reſt or Cordial, where he uſes himſelf to be; therefore, take a Chriſtian, which makes conſcience to bear his weight on the ground and object of Faith (Chriſt in the promiſe of Free-grace) to a ſenſible loſt undone ſinner, let World and Devil conſpire to trouble him, and God try him; ſaith he, I know not what to do, but I'll try my old way, 'tis good for me to draw near ſtill, I'll do ſo ſtill as I uſe to do, I'll caſt
Pſal. 73. 25. my ſelf down upon the Free-Grace of Chriſt in the Promiſe; I'll lay the weight of my ſinking ſpirit there, I'll renew my hold, life, expectation there; this is my old path, I'll never be turned, or beaten out here. This Chriſtian in his ſtrength may challenge all the gates of Hell.
Iſa. 26. 3. This was *David's* courſe, *Pſal.* 71. 5. *Thou art my truſt from my youth*, &c. thence was it, that he could ſay in *Pſal.* 56. 3. *At what time I am afraid, I will truſt in thee*; his ſhield and ſword was always in his hand, therefore he could make uſe of it when fear and inward trouble offered themſelves. Afraid! alas who is not; but, what courſe will you take then? even what courſe you uſe to take, *i. e.* Believe, uſe Faith always, and have it now.

Direct. 3. 3. In reference to the third and ſeventh cauſe of trouble of mind (coming in conjunction with trouble in outward things) *viz.* ſhort and dim Evidence; *Give all diligence to make your calling and election ſure; for if you do ſo, you ſhall never fall, i. e.* under the power of ſin and
2 Pet. 1. 10. wrath, which make up the ſpiritual burden; *but ſo an abundant entrance ſhall be adminiſtred to you into the Kingdom*, &c. *i. e.* you ſhal have a ſafe

a safe and secure, peaceable, quiet, comfortable, well-assured passage through all the straights and storms we can meet withal on this side the Kingdom, even death it self; rest upon Christ always by Faith of adherence on Gospel terms, and you are safe: but rest not, sit not down with this Faith, for 'tis not enough to comfort you in an evil day, though to support it is.

Obj. *Oh! but I have laboured and waited, and yet cannot obtain.*

Ans. But go on and thou canst not miss it (for 'tis promised, *Esay* 32. 17. & 57. 19. *Rom.* 8. 16. &c.) and thou shalt have assurance in thy greatest need; better affliction find thee in this work and pursuit, then put thee upon it (as for certain it will to thy cost) when affliction comes, then first for a man to begin to put the question, Am I in Christ? am I in the state of Grace? favour of God, &c? Oh! thou wilt find it hard to get above thy fears; but *Psal* 46. 1. *God is a very present help in time of trouble. i. e.* for assurance in a darksom state when thou canst make no shift without it; do thou very much seek God for it in thy freedom, and thou shalt be sure of it in thy need, he will be *very much found* (Hebr.) as before, give all diligence to make, and thou art sure.

4. Add hereunto in order to the promoting of a well-grounded evidence and assurance, a prudent observation of, and careful attendance to the doubts, which arise upon occasion, about your condition; there is no Christian attains to that degree of assurance, but is sometimes troubled with doubts, *viz.* such as these: *Direct.* 4.

1. I was never humbled enough; my sore was never searched to the bottom; can my cure be done with so little pain?

2. I never knew the beginning, or manner of my conversion; can Grace like dew come without noise, in insensible degrees? Surely I am at best, but a refined moralist.

3. I can be heartily and excessively afflicted for outward losses, *&c.* but sin, as sin, is not such a burden to me; and the loss of Gods favour goes not so near me.

4. I can pour out my heart in vain delights, but have little liveliness of affection for Spiritual things.

5. I grow heavier, and heavier in duties, and I think were it not for shame, I should be ready to lay them aside, and tread them under foot, so little joy do I take in them, so little good do I get by them, and the like.

Now what dost thou? shift off and let pass these and other like doubts, without endeavouring by what means thou canst, to salve, and

assoil them with some resolution and satisfactron; this will be of ill consequence, I'll tell thee what will come of it, they will return upon thee and be as motes in thy eyes, gravel and thorns in thy feet, when the hand of God is upon thee; whereas if they were well weighed, there would scarce a scruple be found in them.

Direct. 5. 5. To meet with the fourth cause of the Disease, which is some sin returning, *&c.* cast up thy Spiritual Accounts, and set them even every day; observe thy particular sins, offences, breaches, which we are ever making between God and us; humble thy self, in a Heart-breaking, Soul-grieving particular acknowledgement of them, and strengthen thy self, and set thy self aright, by a particular application of Christ in the Grace of the Promise, in reference to these particular offences, so acknowledged; Sins that through negligence escape thy observation, will return to make cracks and flaws in thy Evidence which Affliction will find out to thy terrour and disquietment, but if thou takest this course, the Word is for thee, *i. e. John* 1. 9. *If we confess*; and *Lev.* 26. 40. and now if this or that sin return, what mayst thou say; Truth Lord, I am guilty, and my guilt thou dost justly suffer to be awakened in this evil day, and hour of temptation, but Lord thou knowest this, and this sin in particular hath been my burden, under which I have poured out my heart in groans and complaints, imploring and applying Christ in the promised Grace of Pardon, and Power in reference to it, and thou hast heard it and known it; in this case though Afflictions seem to search out iniquity, yet it shall not be found; but when Affliction starts some sin, which thou didst wink at or slightly pass over, then thou wilt find trouble and sorrow indeed.

Psal. 32. 5.

Direct. 6. 6. Because there is much malignity in this distemper, let me here also add in reference to the same cause, and the sixth, this Preventive. Follow on the Work of Mortification close; there is, a combate between Flesh and Spirit; be sure you take the right side, if sin be it which imbitters thy life, and gives a sting to every Affliction, disarm Affliction, and kill that which will kill thee; the design of the Lord in Affliction is Mortification, now if thou joynest thy hand in the same work, God is ever with thee in the same way, and not against thee; but in case thou conniveſt at, hidest, shelterest some known corruption, then thou canst hardly apprehend God, but as thine Enemy coming against thee.

Isa. 27. 9.

As it was with the City of *Abel*, 2 *Sam.* 20. they were terrified at the approach of *Joab* and *David*'s Army, Oh! saith the woman upon the Wall, *art thou come to destroy the Inheritance of the Lord? no* saith *Joab*,

Joab, but there's a Traitor *Sheba* harboured here, *&c.* 'Tis he that put the City into fear and danger, and made *Joab* seem their Enemy, when his head was delivered all was quiet; now when thou insistest on the business of Mortification, thou wilt joy when thou fallest into Tribulation, as it was with *Jael*, *Judg.* 4. having done execution upon *Sisera*, Come saith she to *Barak*, &c. *Wellcome my Lords*, I know whom you pursue, here he is dead at your feet, *Behold the Nail in his temples*! O! saith one, visited with the stroak of Death, I have been long getting down this body of death, and now God will do all my work at once; be not slack in this work, and Afflictions will be more joyous than grievous,

7. Yet again, to come to the root of this malignity, and in order to the advancing of the work of Mortification: endeavour after mortified affections to the World, these are the suckers that draw away thy strength from God, and the fewel and foment and strength of all that corruption that must be mortified. Aversion from God, with an immoderate clinging and cleaving to the creature, is the whole corruption of Nature. Affliction is the reducing thee to God, and the unglueing, disengaging, and divorcing thee from a carnal worldly interest: therefore *minus gaudebis, minus dolebis*, the less thou joyest, the less thou muest; the less thou layest a World-interest near thy heart, the less that Affliction which is the parting work, will go to thy heart; therefore let all creature-comforts and advantages be loose about thee as thy cloathes, which thou mayest easily lay aside, and not as thy skin, which cannot be pulled off without great torture; Affliction endangers nothing but that which is outward, therefore let not thy excessive respect to that which is without thee, make thy Affliction an inward terrour. If thou counteſt the World of no value, thou wilt be able without inward perplexity and fear to pass through all places of danger and plunder; as the Travellour, when he carries but a small matter, which he knows if he loses, it will not at all grind him. Besides, *If thou lovest the World, the love of the Father is not in thee*, and this will be a desperate venomous sting to thy Soul in thy Affliction; if thou wouldst not have the World thy plague and thy poyson in the enjoying, thy wrack and thy terrour in the losing, comply with the Word and Spirit of Grace in the application of a Christ crucified for the crucifying and mortifying of thy affections unto every earthly interest. *Direct.* 7.

8. In reference to the eighth cause (unacquaintedness with Affliction) live in the meditation and expectation of the Cross, be much in *Direct.* 8.

in the knowledge of the neceſſity, nature, and deſign of afflictions.

1. Neceſſity. 1 *Pet.* 1. 6. *If need be you muſt be in heavineſs for a time.* In reſpect of the terms of the Covenant which lie in this, Deny your ſelf, and take up your Croſs, *&c.* And in reſpect of your diſpoſition, we cannot be without them to wean us from the World, to imbitter the creature to us, to conform us to a crucified Saviour, and make us partakers of his holineſs.

2. The nature and deſign of Afflictions; They are fire not to conſume our Gold, but to purge away our Droſs; they are not revenging Judgements, but fatherly medicinal Corrections; not judicial Poyſon, but remedial Phyſick, *&c.* Therefore 1 *Pet.* 4. 12. *Think not ſtrange,* be not ſtrangers (as the word imports) to the fiery and greateſt tryal, and thou wilt not be diſmayed when it comes. Even Poyſon may be habituated and made innocent. If a ſtranger come in unexpected into our houſe, grim and armed with inſtruments of miſchief, we know not whence he is, nor what he comes for, it will ſtartle and appale us: But if we be acquainted with him and his deſign, and expect him, we are quiet, and compoſed to entertain him. So when Affliction comes, we can ſay, This is the Cup my Father gives me, who I am ſure means me no hurt, this is but what I looked for every day, *&c.* Inure we therefore our ſelves to the Croſs, and make it familiar, converſing with it in our meditation and expectation. Seeſt thou one afflicted with the loſs of a Wife, another of a Husband, another of a Child, another of Eſtate, another begging bread in Priſon or diſtreſs, *&c.* bear part of his burden in ſympathy and pity, and readineſs to ſuccour him, and put thy ſelf in his or her caſe, ſuppoſing thou wert ſo and ſo (it will do thee no hurt), what ſhouldſt thou do? And ſo God will make thy burden light, *Pſal.* 41. 1. So thou wilt be prepared to entertain and meet the burden, and it ſhall not fall upon thee, and upon thy ſpirit to cruſh and ſink thee, &c. Think often, and think not amiſs (have no hard conceits) of Affliction, and it ſhall not be hard upon thee. Take this Courſe, and then as for the malice of Satan, in accuſing and tormenting, and the ſeeming ſeverity of the Lord, in withholding and withdrawing, thou ſhalt not need to trouble thy ſelf, for Satan is a reſtrained and conquered enemy, and cannot hurt thee; and God is reconciled, and will not hurt thee: He may try thee, by intercepting the ſweetneſs of fruition; He will never curſe thee, by intermitting or breaking the firmneſs of the Union; and if he hide his face for a moment, lament after him, and he will viſit thee with the everlaſting kindneſs of his compaſſion, which changes not, though there may be a change as to what thou feeleſt.

Thus

Thus much for the Preventives, to prepare for double Afflictions upon the inward and outward man before they come. Now secondly what shall they do that are already under them?

Negative. Do not go about to settle thy mind by diversion, or turning thy thoughts another way, nor think that time will wear off this trouble; for this will but encrease thy disquiet in it self, or in the causes of it, and wear off the sense of thy condition, which is occasional and preparative to thy well-grounded peace and settlement, *Direct.* 1.

2. Design not a little ease; the sore that is but skin'd over will break out again and be more dangerous, put in therefore for a cure, and that not partial, but through.

Positively take this course upon the sense of thy condition, and the actual knowledge of the fundamental matters of the Covenant of Grace. First, and immediately come, (at least) look unto Christ for Faith, and then by Faith, looking to him as the Author of Faith, believe, *i. e.* consent with all thy heart to receive him, and rest on him on the terms of the Gospel, to be saved by him only in his own way, at his own rate: this is the course *David*, *Jonah*, the Church, in the places aforenamed, took; this is the course the Lord prescribes, *Isa.* 50. *ult. Who*, &c. *Let this Child of Light*, (and such thou art if thou takest this course, fearest to sin against God, and hearkenest to this word I now speak) *sitting in darkness and seeing no light* (there is the depth of trouble of mind) *trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay himself upon his God*; His Name is *the Lord God gracious, &c. Emanuel*, a Saviour, spreading his arms all the day long (any time before the night of death close thy eyes and Christs bowels) even to the disobedient, and will in no wise cast out or lose any that come to him upon all his own terms. Thou dear troubled heart, how wilt thou heal and settle thy self, what wilt thou do? Wilt thou first make satisfaction by thy mourning, humiliation, reformation, purpose of amendment, and so commend and ingratiate thy self to Christ? Thou restlest upon a false bottom, and thy heart deceives thee; found rest and peace is not to be had this way, if it be thy first, principal, or only way. *Direct.* 2. Exod. 33. 19.

On the other hand; Are you willing to let Christ to let you into Heaven, and not lead you his own way, *i. e.* under his Government in all things? then you run away from Christ, and cannot be saved by him as such: But dost thou freely and willingly consent; upon the sense of thy lost condition, to take Christ for all purposes, for Grace and Glory? Thou art welcome to him; and let this be thy rest, in coming to him burdened and weary, willing to take his yoke upon thee; *Mat.* 11. 28. He saves thee

thee to the utmoſt, only upon coming. Let this be ſatisfaction and ſettlement in thy trouble, from whatever cauſe it comes. Oh! how clear is this way according to the contents of the Covenant of Grace which is thus: Chriſt ſtands always ready to receive any that *is willing* to come to him upon his terms, and *will never caſt them off.*

Object. *Oh, but if he were my God and my Chriſt, I would come to him and believe in him.*

Sol. Your coming thus to him upon his own terms makes him yours; gives the intereſt, and ſhall give the true reſt.

Object. *Oh! but I have long ſtood out againſt his invitations, and rejected his importunities; Chriſt hath called graciouſly, and I have heard. His Spirit hath knockt, and my Conſcience hath preſſed me to believe and come, and yet I have ſtood out, and now I may expect he will throw me away with indignation; I have denied Mercy ſo many times, and Mercy will ſurely now deny me*; and here comes in thy trouble.

Sol. No, he will not in any wiſe caſt thee out if thou art willing to come. He knew that all that belong to his Grace, till they are effectually called and quickened, and drawn to cloſe with mercy in the offer, will ſerve him thus, and therefore he waits ſtill, and ſtill, till they can be gotten to be willing to accept and cloſe with him, and then for certain he cloſeth with them.

Object. *Oh! but I have made my addreſs, and ſeemed to come to him, and have made profeſſion, and been taken for a Believer many years, but I have falſified with him. I am a ſtudied Hypocrite, and have compaſſed God with lies: Surely then there is no Mercy for me.*

Sol. All this ariſeth from thy ignorance of the Tenour of the Covenant of Grace, which calls thee to believe upon the ſenſe of this alſo. Suppoſe all this, (though theſe ſad workings of thy doubts and troubles are no bad ſigns, being but part of thy Combate,) yield all againſt thy ſelf if there be no other way, (and it may be there is no better way in this juncture) yet now be willing on Goſpel terms, and it is done, and thou mayſt be at reſt as if all thy former work had been true; and it may be it was true, but however one or the other, thy way is immediately to come, and that ſhall be cleared up afterward; and if thou haſt doubled with God, thou wilt the rather be afraid to do ſo ſtill.

Object. *Oh! but now come? This would be only ſelf and ſlaviſh fear; my neceſſity compels me now; I can make no other ſhift: There is no ingenuity in ſuch a faith as I am like to put forth in this my extremity.*

Sol. Thou muſt yet be willing, *&c.* and all is well. The occaſion of believing is always extremity and neceſſity, for none ever came to Chriſt as long as they

they could make any ſhift without him, but the cauſe if thou comeſt is the mighty power of God to make thee unfainedly willing upon all the terms; and thou art no leſs acceptable to God, becauſe thou art conſtrained by Grace upon the pinch of thy neceſſity to come, *Rom.* 11. 32. *Hoſ.* 5. *ult.* God puts thee to this pinch that he might hear of thee; in that latter place, it is as if God had ſaid, Well, I have called again and again, and uſed variety of means with this People, but all in vain; I will take another courſe, I will leave them, go to my place, hide my ſelf, that trouble, and horrour, and anguiſh ſhall take hold on them; and what then? Shall it be unſeaſonable and too late to come? No, then they will and ſhall ſeek me early; ſee how well-come a ſinner is in this caſe to Chriſt. The Prodigal, he runs his courſe, ſpends all in Riot and Luxury, and was reduced to utter extremity, and then he bethinks himſelf of coming home; *I will go, there be many Manſions in my Fathers Houſe, and I periſh for want of Bread.* Being upon this knowledge of his Fathers fulneſs drawn, and upon ſenſe of his own loſtneſs driven, he comes; And what Salutation do you think his Father might give him? What are you come indeed? In good time? You, that have all this while taken your ſwinge in all Wickedneſs, as long as you could live, my Houſe was not good enough for you; and now, that you have laid me under the reproach of your leudneſs, and fulfilling your luſts, as long as you had a penny in your Purſe, or a rag to your back: Do you now come to me? There is no duty or affection to me that ſwayes you hither, but you are compelled by the extremity you have brought your ſelf to: Get you gone with a ſorrow, and never look me in the face more. Thus we would have thought, but it is quite otherwiſe, his Father, when he did but ſay he would come, meets him afar off, falls on his neck, kiſſes him, brings him home, provides the beſt Room, the beſt Robe, the beſt Kid, all the beſt, and there is great joy; His Father doth not queſtion what draws, or what drives; whether he comes out of compelling neceſſity, or out of ingenuity and dutiful affection; But he is come, that is enough. *This my Son was dead, and is alive; was loſt, and is found*; and there's all done that poſſibly may make him well-come. Apply it for your encouragement to believe, and ſettlement in your undoubted intereſt by Faith. Though you ſeem to come late, and out of neceſſity, yet God's thoughts are not your thoughts, yours may be thoughts of wrath, *&c.* but Gods are of pity, love, acceptation upon your coming. Thus you ſee your way is immediately to come and caſt your ſelves upon Chriſt, on the terms of the Goſpel, and your great trouble ſhall be removed. Luke 15.

Make not a judgment of your condition from what you feel, but from what you hear, from the Word of Grace which now gives sentence on your side.

Direct. 3. Then having this for your support, search, look back to experiences; look into your selves what marks you can find of the truth of your Faith: and in this, be sure you take hold on the Promise that lies nearest to you, *i. e.* is most suitable to your present condition, as in point of fear to sin, *Isa.* 50. 10. Lostness, *Mat.* 18. 11. Poverty of spirit, Longing and thirsting after Righteousness, *&c. Mat.* 5. 3 4, 6. and so one Grace and Promise will draw in all.

Direct. 4. In dependence on Christ in the Promise, wait till he speaks peace and assurance, ever fearing to offend God, especially by casting off duty, distrusting of him, charging him with folly, limitting him to time or means, knowing, and assuring your selves, That you cannot so please God in any thing, as in resolved Faith to cleave to him, and to follow him fully in the patient expectation of the promise of Grace and Glory.

Thus accepting Christ in the Covenant, in the strength of the Grace thereof; Give up thy whole self to Christ in a Covenant of willing universal unreserved obedience, and say with *David*, Psal. 85. 8. *I will hearken what the Lord will say, for he speaketh peace to his people, that* (by the power thereof) *they turn not again to folly.*

In

In what Things must we use Moderation, and in what not?

Phil. 4. 5.

Let your Moderation be known unto all Men, the Lord is at hand.

WHat St. *Austin* said in his dayes of another Scripture, That *it stood more in need of good practising, than any learned Interpretation*: That may I say in these dayes wherein I live, concerning the words that I have read to you at this time. I shall not therefore detain you, with shewing their coherence, (especially considering their intireness) or with any glossing upon them, but haste to open the Nature of this Duty, and press the practice thereof upon you all. In the Verse you have two general parts.

1. An Exhortation to the shewing Moderation, which being in *materia necessaria*, is a Command.

2. The Argument enforcing it, *The Lord is at hand.*

The former will bound my present Discourse, which I need not alter, but according to the Grammatical order the words stand in, might consider the *personæ, res, & actiones* expresst therein, all which make up the whole of the Duty enjoyned: yet if you please to have the Proposition formed, take it thus.

It is God's Command, and our Duty, to let our Moderation be known unto all men. Which I shall prosecute, according to the order of Nature, in this method. 1. In opening the Nature of Moderation. 2. In shewing its Exercise. 3. By whom, and to whom. 4. Why. And lastly, Make Application. Doct.

Moderation opened.

1. Concerning the nature of *Moderation*, or what it is; wherein the signification of the Word, description of the Thing; its Subject, Kinds, Rule, and Extreams. And here I confess I enter upon an unbeaten path; the word ἐπιεικὲς, and ἐπιείκεια, which descends from it, (and for which, by a Græcisme, it is used in the Text) being of such multifarious signification, and no where in Scripture rendred in that extent as here, nor any where else (that I can find) by *Moderation*, which also occurs in no other place of all the Bible. It signifies properly that which is *fit, decent, due, meet convenient.*

Καθῆκον, πρέπον, προσῆκον, ἁρμόζον. Hesych. ἐπιεικὲς τὸ πρέπον. Etymol.

And is accordingly rendred by former Interpreters, *Modestia*; not as opposed to pride or haughtiness, in its strict Philosophick acceptation, (which some not attending to, have therefore quarrelled with) but that which doth moderate our actions, in which sense the Masters of that Language frequently use it; and by later, for avoiding that ambiguity, *Moderatio*, from whence is formed our English word *Moderation*. Which (in its latitude) is not any particular Grace or Vertue, but that fit & proper temper we ought to observe in the governing of our hearts and lives: that equal Judgment which should command our wills and affections, and all our humane actions, which are capable of excess or defect, by proportioning them according to the quality of the Object, and the end for which, and whom they are imployed, for the preserving of peace within our selves, and with others; that there may be no contumacy or rebellion in our affections to disquiet our selves, or in our actions to disquiet others. So that Moderation, according to its Subject, is either that of the mind, which is as the cause, or of the will and affections in their actings, which is as the effect, from all which the whole man is denominated *Moderate*. The former, or that of the mind, is that part of Christian prudence, which proportions our actions to the Object which the will chooseth, and its end, according to the variety of circumstances the agent is in, by applying the general rules of Scripture for our walking, to our particular actions, and is accordingly well rendred here, by one of the Antients, *rationabilis conversatio*, your reasonable or equitable Conversation. The latter, of the will, pertains to the several and particular vertues therein, especially those that serve for the restraining our most strong and impetuous passions, which offer the greatest violence to the equality of our minds. And therefore, although it most properly be of the judgment, yet being most conspicuous and discernable in the exercise of such Vertues, it doth, according to the quality of the Object about which they are conversant, assume their several notions and names. The most violent

Modestia dicta est à modo, ubi autem modus nec plus est quicquam nec minus Cicer. Est autem modestia in animo continens moderationem cupiditatum. Idem. 3. Rhet.

Ambros in loc

lent passions in reference to our selves, being the lusting power after the good things of this life, and consequently the grief which arises from the want or loss of them; it is therefore in reference to the former, *Temperance* (in its large acceptation); and the latter, *Patience*; and in relation to others, the raging power of anger and revenge, with what flows from them, in which regard it is in the Magistrate, *Clemency*, and *humanity, meekness, gentleness, lenity*, in all. In this variety is the word used by Authors, Sacred and Prophane, which I will not clog you with. And for this cause, it consists in that mediocrity which approaches nearer to the extream of defect, and consequently is opposed to *violence, impetuousness, or inordinancy of affection*, (not as placed upon undue objects, for that's materially evil, and to be wholly declined, not moderated, but upon lawful moderation) and in general, to all *excess* in humane actions. Hence it is, (by the way) as I conceive, that it's commanded so frequently in Scripture by negative Precepts, as, *Love not the World, nor the things of the World*, John 2. 15. *Take no thought for your life, for the morrow*, Matth. 6. 24, 31, 34, *verses*. *Fear not them which kill the body*, Mat. 10. 12, 31. Luke 12. 4, 7. *Let not your hearts be troubled*, John 14. 1. and many the like, which I cannot stand to mention; and sometimes by the action contrary to its opposite vice, as *Matth.* 5. 39, 40, 41. *Turn the other cheek, let him have thy Cloak also, go with him twain*, i. e. rather than violently resist, and revenge thy self. Moderation then being no particular Grace or Vertue, (as you have heard) cannot have any peculiar object, but only in common with the Principles, and actions wherein it is imployed; whereby it becomes uncapable of any future accurate division into several kinds. For although it be of a general consideration, yet not as a Principle which acts upon its Object, but that which peculiarly respects the actions themselves, when the Object is pitched upon, it being Moderations Office to regulate and govern Principles in their actings upon their due Objects chosen, that they exceed not therein. So that all those Graces and Vertues, which respect the *manner of Actions*, as Zeal, Sincerity, *&c.* that respect the moral quality, as this doth the moral quantity, degree, or measure of them, are of so many several kinds, as the actions are wherein they are conversant; so also is Moderation. And in regard our particular actions are so very many, so diverse, and cloathed with such infinite variety of circumstances; it is impossible to lay down any certain *Rule*, that may determine wherein Moderation in them all should consist: The τὰ δίοντα, or the things that are just, necessary, and convenient, and no other, being alwayes in particular actions very difficult

ἐπιεικὲς τῷ βιάῳ opponit Hermog. μεσὸν ὑπερβολῆς καὶ ἐλλείψεως, ἐπιεικὲς, &c. Isoc.

difficult to define, as the Philosopher acknowledgeth, who saith, *There is nothing more full of difficulty, than in every thing to find the Mean:* The Rule he lays down to walk by, is Reason, and a prudent mans determination; the best Nature affords, and are especially good for the Duties of the second Table, which he only (though not to all) speaks of; yet we (through the goodness of God) have a more sure and certain one to guide us, to which we shall do well to take heed, even the Scriptures, which are able to make us wise to Salvation. It will be worth our while, to speak briefly, what we can, touching the *Rule*, which in general must guide and determine our Moderation. For which end we must know, that all our humane actions, which are capable of moral good or evil, are of two sorts, especially according to their Objects, *Religious* or *Civil*. The former requires a Spiritual Principle, End, and Rule, by which we must perform them for their manner and measure, which Scripture doth abundantly for the internal by its particular, and sufficiently for the external, by its general Precepts, declare. For the latter or Civil Actions, as a natural principle and end referrible to God's Glory; so also for their manner and measure, the general rules of Scripture to allow, and prescribe them, is all we can reasonably expect, and is sufficient for the same. In the Application whereof, Reason and prudent determination are three wayes subservient.

1. In judging the Nature or Quality of the Objects in general, which we are particularly imployed about, (as the good things, or evils of this life, in the particulars wherein we are conversant) according to what Scripture declares them to be, when it speaks of them, especially not comparatively, but absolutely what they are in themselves.

2. Of the end God hath ordained such things for, about which he hath commanded us to be imployed, and accordingly to proportion our actions. It being a known Rule in the Schools, *Omnium appetibilium finis est mensura*; or, that the end is that which must prescribe the measure of our actings, according to its double respect, *rei, & personæ*, for what, and for whom the action is.

Lastly, In due consideration of the circumstances of the Agent, wherein is such great variety, not only in regard of the person, which involves the end *for whom* the action is, but all the adjacent circumstances, that herein occurs by far the greatest difficulty. For example, In Meats and Drinks. Consider diligently their nature in those set before thee; then their end, for refreshing us, not feeding our lusts; and of thy self, what is sufficient and convenient for thee in the circumstances thou art then in, and accordingly use them, or put a knife to thy

throat

throat and refrain, as the Wise man speaks, *Prov.* 13. 2. for that which may but be sufficient for one, may serve for another to make his Belly his God: yea, that which may be only convenient to the same person at one time, may be gluttony and excess at another. And as about things, so in our dealing with others much more variety, both in respect of our selves, and those we have to do withal. As we must remit that to one, we need not, nay, sometimes ought not to another, according to our own and their capacity; as they are poorer or richer than our selves, as they are weak, or wilful and malicious opposers of Truth or Equity; and a thousand such like considerations, which occur in our actions; which though alwayes sufficient in themselves to determine us, yet because of our shortness of sight, are often but as the uncertain twinkling star-light to us, whereby to steer our course.

All that's said of Moderation, will more clearly appear, if we consider its *Extreams*, from the nature of God's Commands, which are of two sorts. 1. Some are Affirmative, and those either general what we must do, *&c.* and imply the end for which, and all the circumstances that necessarily attend our doing it: Or particular, and express. the circumstances External, as time and place, and Internal (usually called the manner) which comprehends the quality, and the moral quantity or proportion, we are speaking of) which implies the *intensness*, *frequency*, and *duration* of our actions. These continually oblige us, though not to continual practice, but only when God requires; the former by way of more absoluteness, the latter more conditionally, as depending *therenpon*. 2. The other sort of precepts are Negative, somewhat we must not do, and so consequently at once forbid all the concomitants of such actions as are prohibited; others not forbidding us the Object, but rectifying us about it, in the end we most do it, for manner how, *&c.* both which obliges to continual observance; and in morals, *to the contrary duties*. By which it appears, in our not right proportioning our actions, we sin in omission, by not doing so fully as he commands; in commission, when we do those things that are our duty, but exceed therein, and go beyond the bounds God hath set us: and this is formally immoderateness, which is rectified by Moderation. As for actions materially evil, as *Jonah*'s being angry with God, hating vertue, and loving vice, *&c.* which are absolutely forbidden, no proportion is to have place, but it, and all other circumstances, together with the action, wholly avoided or suppressed, because towards undue objects forbidden us, there can be no defect, in regard there should be no action, and therefore no Moderation or Government thereof.

For

For instance, in those two great Commands, on which hang all the Law and the Prophets, as our blessed Saviour tells us, *Matth.* 22 46. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy Neighbour as thy self,* Luke 10. 27. Here's the Grace of Love required to act towards God; the manner expresst, in *heart, soul, strength, mind*; the measure, in the four *all's*, (the New Testament adding one to the three of the Old Testament, so far is the Gospel from detracting from duty): here can be no excess, in regard we can never love him as he deserves; not only in regard of what he hath done for us, but is to us, being our end and happiness; and towards our Neighbour, the manner expresst, *as thy self*, i. e. truly and sincerely, but not *with all thy heart*, &c. that's only God's due, who is absolutely to be loved for himself, others for him. Herein, alas, Grace is defective, but never exceeds, so that Moderation hath here no place; for if we love any person or thing more than God, Christ, and our selves, it is not the action of Grace, but sinful affection, which is to be moderated. For he that with his natural affection loves Father or Mother, Wife or Child, (which yet they ought greatly to love) more than God or Christ, is not worthy of them.

I am not ignorant all this while, that this word ἐπιείκεια, is most frequently used in a *forensical or Law sense*, more strictly: The *Moralists*, *Schoolmen*, and *Civilians*, borrowing it from *Aristotle*, and restraining it to that *particular moderation of mitigating strict justice in the execution of humane Laws*, and so is rendred, *Equitas Equitis*. Which is either that of the Magistrate in his publick capacity, & is so *Clemencia clemencie*, and is opposed to *Cruelty*: The Magistrate being obliged, as not to write his Laws in blood, like *Draco's*, so also not to execute them with cruelty, (though, where requisite, with severity) but to moderate them by the Law of Nature, other Laws, former Precedents, constant Customs, which hath the nature of Laws, or the reason and end of the Law, which is more equitable (and more Law, say some) than the Letter, and amongst Christians, by the written Laws of God, that there may be *convenientia pœnæ ad delictum*, or a proportioning Punishment to the quality of the Offence, all Circumstances (which the Law cannot possibly foresee or provide for) being duly considered. This includes all Superiors, Political, Ecclesiastical, Domestical, *&c.* and is frequently joyned with *Justice* and *Judgement* in Scripture, as executed both by God and Man, *Psal.* 98. 9. & 99. 4. *Isa.* 11. 4. *Prov.* 1. 3. & 2. 19, 17, 26. *Mich.* 3. 9, *&c.* Or secondly, that of private persons, (or publick in their private capacity) which is between party and party, when according.

according to the rules of equity, we omit what the rigor of the letter of the Law would adjudge us, thereby neither injuring our selves or others, which is usually called *probitas*, or *honestas*; by us *common honesty* that should be 'twixt man and man. And hence some borrow it, and restrain it to that carriage the Law takes not cognizance of, in our meekness and gentleness, making it that single Virtue the Moralists call *mansuetudo*, we meekness. But though it be all these, yet 'tis also more, these not reaching the Latitude of the word ἐπιείκεια, nor the extent of the duty here enjoyned; the word being not used here in that strict sense the Philosophers use it, (as the learned *Grotius* well observes upon the place:) but for that equalness of Mind and Spirit that becomes us in our conversation, and diffuseth it self through many, very many other actions, than are proper to these Virtues: and though sometimes restrained to this, or that particular kind of Moderation, yet in it's latitude (as the best Philologers tell us) denotes *Mediocrity, Indifferency, Equality*, or the like. And in this general acception, which I may call the *Moral or Theological Sense*, not restraining it to (though not excluding) the *forinsecal* and stricter acceptation threof, I shall through Gods assistance handle it; The rather, because our Judicious and Learned *Perkins*, hath in a peculiar little Tractate already spoken sufficiently to that particular, of the Moderation of Justice by the Magistrate, and private persons, in reference to their remitting from the rigour of the Law which every one may peruse, and I seriously wish they would also practise.

Μέσος, ἐπιεικὴς. Hesych. ἐπιεικῶς σημαίνει τὸ μέσως. Etym. ἐπιεικῶς μέτριος. Suid. τὸν τρόπον μεταχειρίζεται, πρόσωπον, &c i.e. ἐπιείκειαν. *Scoliast. in lib.* 1. Thucyd.

2. General now follows; *The exercise of Moderation*, wherein the case proposed is included, *viz.* *The exercise of Moderation*

Case, *Wherein must we practise Moderation.*

Which necessarily implies the *external object*, or about what our Moderation must be conversant, and appear to all; call it the *object* of the *Faculty* or of the *Action*, or of *Moderation*, when imployed in governing these, and so hath the same object with them (as is said before) it all comes to one.

And formally includes, 1. *What it is that we must Moderate*: or the *faculty*, or *principle*, of what kind soever internal and external, from which the action flows. 2. *In what Actions.* And 3. *How*, or the measure and proportion to be observed in such our actions. Which three are always distinct in themselves, though not always easily distinguishable to us, and therefore often seem coincident. I shall therefore joyn them together in the prosecution of the Case.

For the general Object of Moderation, or about what it must be exercised and appear. *Negatively.*

1. *Not such things as are materially good.* About such things, or in such actions as are materially good, Moderation hath no place, because all the good we can possibly do, is too little, so that there can be no excess in these, and therefore no Moderation: for the Office of Moderation being to restrain excess; where there can be none of this, that can have no imployment. *e. g.* we cannot believe in, hope, love God and Christ too much, nor hate sin, and Satan (as the School-men affirm) in regard of his wholly losing the Image of God too much. In all our internal religious duties, and actings of Grace, as such, no Moderation therefore can or ought to have place.

2. *Not about such things as are materially evil.* For herein we cannot be defective. Where the object is absolutely forbidden us, and no circumstances can make the action good, there we are wholly to abstain, or suppress the action, if in it, there being inordinacy in the principle or faculty; for though Moderation is to govern even the principle, yet not in the choice of its object, but in its exercise about a due object chosen that it exceed not. And though we call any great acting upon an undue object, or great omission towards due, immoderate, because of their excess, yet this is not properly immoderacy, for so every sin would be it formally, whereas those only which respect the moral quantity of our actions, are properly immoderacies. Both these sufficiently appear by what's said before.

Positively. But about such things as are in themselves of an indifferent nature, and neither absolutely commanded, as things materially good, or absolutely forbidden, as those materially evil, but only conditionally according to the circumstances we are in. Which though of an indifferent nature, yet become morally good or evil to us, as we are actually conversant about them. In these properly may be excess, in regard of which Moderation is to take place to restrain, and keep all within due bounds, being formally the *modification* (to use the School term for once) of such actions. Wherein we must carefully distinguish of the several formalities of the object, Grace and Nature being conversant about the same object, but not in the same respect.

For its exercise therefore, or what, wherein, and how we must practise it.

Which I shall speak of, 1. Absolutely in reference to our selves, for preserving peace within, as it is to be exercised towards the good and evils of this life.

2. Rela-

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2. Relatively, or in relation to others for externall peace, wherein we must exercise it, in *Civil* and in *Religious matters*. The former I shall call *Moderation towards Things*, the latter *towards Persons*.

1. *Moderation towards Things.*

1. *First then for Moderation towards Things*, as it is absolutely taken in reference to our selves: this being so clearly injoyned in the Text, as appears not only by the word ἐπιείκεια, but the duty γνωσθήτω; The Apostle not saying, use Moderation *towards* all men, but let it appear *to* all men, which even that which is internal doth in our external conversation. But though there be abundance of excellent fruit on this branch of Moderation, yet in regard I conceive that *towards Persons* principally intended, I will not stand to shake it down, but only point you out briefly the boughs, on which it especially grows, that you may gather it your selves, and proceed to the second, *Moderation towards others*, which I shall only prosecute afterwards in all the following discourse. Now the *good things* of this life being either *internal*, of the Mind, as Parts, Learning, &c. of the Body, as Health, Strength, Beauty and the like: or *External*, as the Riches, Honours, Relations, and lawful pleasures of the World, and what comprehended under them: And the *evils* of this life, such as are contrary to these, as shallowness of Parts natural or acquired, Sickness, Weakness, Death, Deformity, Poverty, losses of Friends or Estate, Infamy, Reproaches, Troubles, Wars, Hunger, Thirst, Nakedness, Imprisonment, Captivity, Banishment, and such like: we are towards these to exercise Moderation.

2. *Towards the good things of this life.* 1. *We must moderate our Judgments in the valuation of them.* As forbidden fruit must not be looked upon, so lawful must not be judged by us more desirable than it is. As we may not undervalue these good things, and with the *Stoick* dispise and cast them away; so we must not over-value them, beyond their intrinsick worth and the ends for which God allows them, the end and use being the measure of every things estimation. For though every creature be good in it self, and some better in themselves, and to us than others: yet those that are the best, and best for us that the World affords, are still but creatures, who are most of them serviceable only to our bodies, that they may be serviceable to our Souls, in the service of our Heavenly Father: which when we too much estimate, we quickly fall to admire, and so bow down to them, and commit Idolatry with them. For an over-valuation of the Judgment, begets in us admiration, and so an over-valuation of them also in our affections. These

sensitive objects make such impressions upon our imagination when absent, and our passions when present, that if Grace and Reason moderate not our Judgement of them, our whole man becomes inflamed therewith, and violently carried out towards them, by an excessive admiration of their seeming excellency, love to them for the same, and desire after them, for their apprehended suitableness, hope to obtain them, seeming possible, using means for obtaining them, *and delighting* and glorying in them. Therefore our Saviour prescribes wisely, that our hearts may not be in them, the light of our minds being single, *Matth.6. 22,23.* When *Achan* (*Josh. 7.21.*) judged the Babylonish Garment *goodly*, and the Silver and Gold, then he quickly coveted and took them. Let thy Moderation therefore begin here, and consider the character *Solomon* upon good experience gives them, that they are all to us in this degenerate state *Vanity of Vanities*, yea, *vexation of Spirit.*

2. *Moderate thy will and affections, in their love, desires, hopes, after the getting or keeping these things; according to the ends for which God allows them thee in particular, and with subordination to his Pleasure and Providence in the event.* We must value, love, desire God and Christ, and hope in them, absolutely and for themselves, the Grace absolutely, but for the injoyment of them (and consequently for our own happiness;) but so must we not these things, but only conditionally, as God in his All-wise disposing Providence sees meet to dispense to us, (he having so only promised them, and for those ends and so far forth as they are *convenient for us*, according to *Agurs* desire, *Prov.* 30.8. Which conveniency is to be measured by the estate the Providence of God hath set us in, and the circumstances wherein we are. As so much health, strength, refreshment, comfortableness in our lives, as God sees good for us, and may render us serviceable to him; so much Food, Raiment, Profit, Pleasure as he pleaseth to bestow, and so far forth as convenient for us, according to our present condition, for our health, and other ends now mentioned, to which they refer; but neither these nor any other good things of this life absolutely, or for themselves, so as to make them our end and happiness, or to be fuel for our lusts, must we either love, desire, or hope for. It is not thus the desiring the lawful pleasures, profits, honours of this life, which St. *John* speaks of 1 *Joh.* 2. 16. but the immoderacy of the desiring them which he calls *lust*, and saith *it is of the World*; as well he may, seeing this is the Trinity that it generally worshipeth more than the blessed Trinity of Heaven. Is it not the cry of many, nay most, *Who will shew us any good?* but of how few,

Lord

Lord lift thou up the light of thy Countenance upon us! Pſal. 4. 6. How do men graſp at theſe things in their deſires, which are as boundleſs as the Ocean, as craving as the Horſeleach daughters ſtill crying, *Give, give*; as unſatiable as the Grave; and as unſatisfied as Hell and Deſtruction, towards which they are travelling. What *Libanius* obſerved ſo long ſince, (and 'tis worth the obſerving) holds as true at this day. It's difficult, ſaith he, to meet with a man, ſatisfied and not complaining of his condition. If he want any bodily good, as Beauty, Strength, *&c.* or, if none of theſe, yet not thankful, if he want ſome of the mind, if he be not an Orator, Phyſitian, skilful Commander, or the like. And eſpecially in Riches and Honours. He that hath one Field, would have, and complains if he have not two; he that hath two, for four; he that hath ten, for twenty; and he that hath twenty, twice ſo many; and ſo on, no number ſatisfying his deſire. For though it be great before, when we enjoy any thing, it then ſeems ſmall to us; as one thouſand talents of Gold, when we have them, are ſmall to two, and two to ten, and ſo on. In Honours likewiſe, he that governs a City is not ſatisfied becauſe he governs not the Nation, and if the Nation, that no more; as *Cyrus*, *Darius*, and *Xerxes*, mighty Princes, yet they wanted *Greece* they thought, which cauſed their Expeditions againſt it. Thus paſſing by ſtill what we have, and reckoning what we have not, never think we enjoy enough. Ἀδικῶν ἐν ἀδικούμενος, every one herein being injurious to God, not injuriouſly dealt with by him. Keep therefore thy heart, and moderate it that it break not out in theſe things with all diligence, leſt the ſwarms of theſe luſts, what ever ſweetneſs they ſeem to bring with them, ſting thee to death.

λόγος γ' περὶ ἀπληστίας.

3. *Moderate thy purſuit and endeavours after the acquiring and retaining theſe, by the ends for which, and ſubordination wherewith thou mayeſt and oughteſt deſire them.* This ſpeaking only the execution of the former particular, muſt needs be accordingly bounded. What we may lawfully deſire, that we may uſe lawful means to attain; and ſo far forth as we muſt deſire, ſo far only muſt we uſe the means. We muſt ſeek the Kingdom of God and his Righteouſneſs abſolutely, and in the firſt place; then the things convenient for us in this life, according to their ſubſerviency thereto, and his ſeeing good to beſtow upon us. As it is the Statute Law of Heaven, that *in the ſweat of our brows we ſhould eat our bread*, and ſhould be our daily prayer, that our *Father which is in Heaven* would *give us this day our daily bread*, i. e. all things requiſite and convenient; ſo is it that we ſhould *not lay up for our ſelves treaſures upon earth*, nor ſerve theſe as *our Maſters*, nor *take thought for our lives, what*

what we ſhall eat, or what we ſhall drink, or wherewithal we ſhall be cloathed (which three are the total ſum all theſe externals amount to in their uſe) *Mat.* 6. 19, 24, 25. *&c.* Our bleſſed Saviour from the 19th verſe of that Chapter, forbidding this immoderate purſuit in thoſe negative precepts, which he preſſeth with ſeveral cogent argumenrs and expoſtulations; and not abſolutely, but ſo as they may be not our *Treaſures* that we ſet our hearts upon, our *Maſters* that we ſerve, when as they are but our Servants, and ſo as that we oppoſe them not to, *and* ſet them in competition with the *Treaſures in Heaven*, and God our great *Maſter*, whom we ought to ſerve even in the following our imployments for theſe; as appears *verſ.* 19, and 24. nor abſolutely our taking thought, but our too ſollicitouſneſs about the choice of, and uſing means, and eſpecially their event, and ſo conſequently what ſhall become of us, *if* we be not bleſt but blaſted therein, as appears by the word μέριμνα, in the laſt verſe of the Chapter. And yet (alas!) after all this, how do we ſeek them as if they were our treaſure, our happineſs, our *all*? as if here was our continuing City, wherein we ſhould alwayes live, and have theſe treaſures, and none other to come that hath better? Though theſe be things after which *the Gentiles ſeek*, yet they will be excuſable who know no better in compariſon of thee and me, who know the true Pearl of price, are invited and called to better dainties, and yet make light thereof, one preferring his Farm, another his Merchandiſe, *Mat.* 22. 5. And yet though the generality of the *Gentiles* which had not the Goſpel, as the *Jews* in our Saviours time, were ſo immoderate; yet many of them were ſuch as appears by their works, and lives, as I fear will riſe up in Judgement in this particular, againſt moſt of us that call our ſelves *Chriſtians*. They beholding the buſie World (as one of them ſpeaks of the Souls in the other) as the Ant carrying a ſtraw, or ſome little thing of like moment, into her hole in the Mole-hill; which yet dazels our eyes with their ſeeming luſter, and makes our hearts ſay of theſe our houſes as if they were our homes, *'Tis good for us to be here.*

4. *We muſt moderate our whole man in the uſe and enjoyment of theſe, in our loving, delighting, rejoycing and glorying in them.* We muſt not in our uſing of them, exceeding the bounds within which they are allowed us; nor in our love towards them, 1 *John* 2. 15. *Love not the World, neither the things that are in the World*, by taking too much complacency and delight in them; not our rejoycing, *Eccleſ.* 11. 9. If thou doſt, know, *for all theſe things God will bring thee to Judgment*. Nay our Saviour when the Diſciples *returned with joy that the Devils were ſubject to them*

them, *Luk.* 10.17. which was a divine and extraordinary gift, calls them off, and shews them a fit matter of rejoycing, wherein they could not exceed; not absolutely forbidding, but limiting them with a *rather, but rather rejoyce that your names are written in Heaven*, v. 20. Nor in our glorying in them, *Jer.* 9. 23,24. O what need of moderation here! In our eating, drinking, sleeping, lawful recreations, raiment; in the using of our parts, Learning, Riches, Honours, and other Creature-comforts! if the enjoyment of these outward things had been so considerable, think you our blessed Saviour, who could have commanded them, would have wanted them? What are the best of them? Are thy Riches any thing, but of the Earth, and earthly? Thy Pleasures any thing, but a little titillation of the flesh, of no permanent nature, lives but one instant and dies as fast? Thy Honour any thing, besides a hollow eccho, or noise, that, like the circle of the water, is but of little circumference, and soon gone? doth not every cross wind, or wave, break and dash it away? Is not he that's great in this City, scarce known in the next? He that's King in one Nation, unknown to many other Nations? How short lived, I pray? Have there not been many great ones we never heard of? Those we read, do we not skip their names often, not troubling our selves with the thought or remembrance of them? If we do, what are they the better? Read *Psal.* 103.14,15,16,17,18. Nay, have not the greatest judgements of God followed excess in things lawful? I will trouble you with none but a few Scriptural Examples: Two of the greatest the World ever knew, the Flood, and destruction of *Sodom* and the rest of the Cities of the Plain; to what are they ascribed but Security and Excess? *They did eat, they drank, they married Wives, they were given in marriage*: What follows? *the Flood came and destroyed them all*, Luk. 17.27. *Likewise in the days of* Lot, *they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded*, (all again things lawful in themselves) *but the same day that* Lot *went out of* Sodom *it rained fire and brimstone from Heaven, and destroyed them all*, ver. 28,29. If *David* took too much Pride and Glory in the number of his People, and fell to numbring them, God quickly follows with Pestilence, and makes them decrease seventy thousand, 1 *Chron.* 21.14. If *Nebuchadnezzar* will vaunt *Is not this great Babylon that I have built, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my Majesty?* While the word is in his mouth there falls a voice from Heaven, *The Kingdom is departed from thee*, and he is turned to grass with the Oxen, *Dan.* 4. 30, 33. And his Son *Belshazzars* great Feast fills up the measure, for which he was that night slain, & his Kingdom taken, *Dan.* 5.1,30,31. If the rich man will think thus, and

so

so will I do and say, *Soul, thou hast goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry:* He is not only stigmatized for a *fool*, but *this night shall thy Soul be required of thee* follows, *Luk.* 12.19,20. Nay, if the wicked servant begin to *eat and drink with the drunken*, his Lord will come unexpectedly, and *cut him asunder, and appoint his portion with the Hypocrites, Mat.* 24.49,51. How great then this sin is, Gods judgments being always equal, and proportioned to our offences, what slight thoughts soever we may have of it, you cannot but by these Examples perceive; Nay rather what a big-bellied Monster is it? *full* of many deadly sins, of *Atheism, unbelief, Idolatry, carnal security*, preferring these things before God, Christ, Heaven, and happiness. Take heed and beware therefore herein, lest while they speak thee fair, they wound thy heart.

2. *Towards the evils of this life*; 1. *We must moderate our fears of these befalling us, according to the good they threaten to deprive us of.* As we must not fear these groundlessly, so when there is just cause, and apparent danger, we should not be senseless, and secure, nor fear all alike, or over-fear any Security is the fore-runner to destruction, 1 *Thes.* 5.3. which these should awake us out of, but not so affect us, or affright us, as to put us past our selves and our duty; when the storm threatens us, we must not, with *Jonah*, be asleep, but praying and endeavouring, as the poor Marriners, for preservation; Or as the Disciples, *Lord, save us, we perish*; though they were too fearful, in regard of Christs being with them, who was sufficient security for their safety. There is a *provident fear*, that opens our eyes to foresee dangers, and quickens us in the use of lawful means for their prevention; such was the good Patriarch *Jacob's*, of *Esau* his destroying him and his company; that makes him pray, send presents to his brother, divide his bands, and use all prudent means of preservation, *Gen.* 32. this we must have: for security & putting far away the evil day, when God threatens us even with temporal Judgments, is a great sin, and hath a *Wo* pronounced upon it, *Amos* 6. whereas this makes us wisely serve the Providence of God. But then there is a *diffident fear* that distracts us, and cuts all the nerves and sinews of lawful care and endeavours, that brings a snare with it, (*Prov.* 29.25.) and often drives us upon unwarrantable means, or makes us sit down in despair. This we must beware of, by a due moderating our fears according to the impendent evil, which must be judged by its opposite *good*. Not fearing all evils alike; the loss of some wealth like the loss of our health, because health is the better good; no nor all evils of the same kind alike, not a Tertian Ague like the Stone, this by its exquisit pain, depriving us more of the natural comfort

comfort of health, and more endangering our lives. And not overfearing the greatest, *viz. Death*, called by *Job, the King of Terrors*, (15. & 14). and by the Philosophers, φοβερῶν φοβερώτατον, *of all terribles, the most terrible*; which our Saviour, as man, feared with a natural fear, yet chargeth we should not over-fear it, *Mat.* 10.28. *Luke* 12.4. Yea, though we should fear political or publick evils, as Wars, Famine, Pestilence, more than our own personal, (of which you see I speak only all along). in regard these are greater, the publick good being better, and to be preferred before any private, yet not these too much.

2. *We must moderate our grief and trouble for these, according to the good we want or lose by them.* There are *imaginary evils*, that are of our own creation, begot, brought up, & nourished only by our own brain; these we must carefully avoid, & if formed, not be cruel to our selves, in being compassionate to them, but dash them in pieces. And there are *real evils*, which come not forth of our own dust, nor spring out of the ground, but are from above, of Gods creating and framing *Amos* 3.6. *Isa.* 45.7. *Jer.* 18.11. These we are not to be senseless under, but duly affected with, and yet not over-affected, so as to murmur and repine, much less quarrel with God. A Stoical Apathy becomes us not, and yet better than quarrelling at Gods Providence, it coming nearer *moderation*; for *wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sin? Lam.* 3.39. Little reason, whilst thou art living, seeing it is less than thy desert, and no reason even for Death and Hell, for they are but equal to thy desert; if thou confess thy self a sinner, thou must confess this. *Plato* said, that God doth ἀεὶ γεωμετρεῖν, which is expounded by *Plutarch* well; That God is said alwayes to act the Geometrician, in regard of his equal dealing with all men, in proportioning rewards and punishments to their deserts: And a greater than he, yea, the greatest that can be, God himself appeals to the sinners own Conscience, *Is not my way equal? Are not yours unequal? Ezek.* 18. which whole Chapter is a defence of his equity. Troubled then we may be, murmuring and discontented we must not be. Nay, troubled we ought to be, as the evils are greater or less, which must be judged by the good they deprive us of; more for publick, because that good is greater; less for private evils, because our own good is not equal to the communities. But in the body politick 'tis quite otherwise than in the natural body; we are usually too senseless under publick, and too sensible of, and immoderate under our own particular evils: rather apt to quarrel with God, like *Jonah*, for a *Gourd*, or some inconsiderable concerns of our own, than be troubled at the destruction of a great *Nineveh*; more troubled at our own houses

Sympos. l. 8. Q. 2.

being on fire, or Child sick, than all our Neighbours in the City about us burnt and dead. Therefore Scripture accordingly calls for affection for the Publick, and forbids it in our own concernments, in regard we are generally defective in the former, and excessive in the latter. Nay, even towards others, when just cause of compassion, if excessive. So our Saviour, when the Women lamented his death, (which was matter of grief, as in respect of him, though of greatest joy in it self, as to them and the World) bids them, *Weep not for me, but for your selves, and your Children*, in regard of the publick calamities that were coming upon *Jerusalem*, *Mat.* 23.27,28,29. Every particular being concerned in the community. Now of these evils, seeing all are privations of good; *Some are of the good we want and never enjoyed*, as deformity of body, defect in parts, constant poverty, *&c.* and here we must beware we judge not those evils, which are none, and so trouble and torment our selves without cause, and reproach our *Maker*, saying, *Why hath he made me thus?* Why am I no nobler born, no more beautiful made, no greater Heir, no quicker parted? Why am I not as such, or such, not as they, this, or that? When thou hast what is suitable and convenient for thy condition; for this all may say of those that excel them (and the best of imaginary excellencies) as well as thou. *Other evils are of the good we have enjoyed, and are deprived of*; as want of health, losses of Friends and Estate, reproaches of our good name, imprisonment of liberty, and the like, which are incident to our present state. These are they especially which the World lament, and cry out after, as foolishly as *Micah*, (*Judg.* 18.14.) *Ye have taken away our Gods; and what have we more? and sayest thou, What aileth us?* We must not here be too passionately excessive, either in the degree or duration of our trouble; we must be affected with the providence of God in these evils, according to their greatness to us, (a little loss in it self, may be great to a poor man; as the Widows two Mites was more to her, than their far greater sums was to them that cast them in; the death of an only Child greater than when a number) and so trouble and sorrow for them; but discontented we must not be, nor distracted in the duties God requires; not refuse to be comforted, because our Husbands, Wives, Children, Pleasures, Honours, Riches are not; for as there is a time to weep, so a time to take up, and refrain from weeping; we must love them so, as we may lose them, that when we do, we may not lose our selves, *Amavi hæc omnia tanquam amissurus*, let us every one say at parting with them, I loved you so as I can lose you. Take heed of murmuring with the Israelites, cursing thy Stars with the prophane; of discontentedness, which the best are apt to

fall

fall into, nay, wish for death rather than life, as several of the Prophets. Maintain that equilibrious frame in thee, (as *David*, 2 *Sam.* 15. 26.) *Here I am, let God do to me as seemeth good to him*, which is the Mother of *patience*, and like it makes these evils (though not one, yet become) none to us.

Thus I have done with *moderation towards things*, most of whose particulars mentioned, you have prest by the Apostle *Paul*, and by the same Argument of the Text, 1 *Cor.* 7. 29, 30, 31. *The time is short. It remaineth that both that have Wives, be as though they had none: & they that weep, as though they wept not: and they that rejoyce, as though they rejoyced not: and they that buy, as though they possessed not: and they that use this World, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this World passeth away.* And though I have stood longer upon this than I intended, and promised both you and my self, in regard the fruit hung so thick about me, that I could not but pluck some of it, and after I had tasted it, more; yet I hope it will prove so pleasant also to the taste, that you will pardon me; especially considering how much this Moderation towards things conduceth to that which respects persons; (the contentions in the World arising usually from our want of Moderation to the things of the World, as in civil matters it is patent; & in religious, though less obvious, yet most frequently as certain, that these are the springs from which they flow) and how necessary it is for us all to know and practise it; for *licitis perimus omnis*, we usually perish by the hand of these lawful things.

2. *Moderation towards Persons.*

Having spoken of Moderation, as it respects our selves, for preserving peace within, (this, as all Government, having *peace* for its end) which appears, and is made known to others by our Conversation; let us now look abroad, as we are members of the publick, and have to do with others, and see what Moderation we must use for the preserving *external peace*. Now each Christian having a double capacity, as a *Man* his civil capacity in the *State*; as a *Christian*, his religious capacity in the Church wherein he lives: I shall speak to both these, in reference to Peace *Political* and *Ecclesiastical*; to the former more briefly, being so near a kin to that part we have already dispatched.

1. *In civil matters.*

Herein we may be considered, *Actively* or *Passively*. 1. *Actively. We must moderate our speeches, that we give no just provocation thereby, according to prudence.* That we may neither provoke those of whom, or to whom we speak, we must duly consider the nature of the matter we speak of, and the quality and temper of the persons concerned.

In our diſcourſes with others; not trifling in weighty matters, and ſervent in trifles of no moment; nor raſhly to thy Superiors, without reſpect, not ſupercilioufly to thy Inferiors, not contentioufly to thy equals; we alſo muſt have regard to their temper, if paſſionate and angry, with ſoft, not grievous words; or if tender and meek-ſpirited, with the like, (for theſe two different tempers muſt be alike, though for different ends dealt withal); if contumacious, more ſharply; if flexible, gently; if teaſty or jealous, more tenderly and cautiouſly; if equal, with more freedom and liberty; and ſo of all others. Yea, we muſt alſo obſerve their preſent condition, if diſtreſſed, or joyful and comfortable, and the like; and the diſpoſition they are in, (which for the moſt part is ſutable thereto) as ſad and dejected, or chearful and pleaſant, beyond their accuſtomed temper, and accordingly moderate our ſpeeches, as the wiſe Man adviſeth, *Prov.* 25.20. At no time ſtirring up contention, or ſpeaking Swords and Darts, but as the Wiſe, whoſe *tongue is health*, Prov. 18.6. & 12.18.

In our judging, characteriſing, and cenſuring of others; we muſt alſo conſider for what, of whom, and to whom we do it; not for every failing, and weakneſs, or miſcarriage, nor upon ſlight grounds; not readily taking up a reproach againſt our Neighbour, and raſhly venting it, *Prov.* 10. 12. nor jealouſly framing one, and according thereto paſſing verdict; for though there be a charitable and godly jealouſie, we may exerciſe towards thoſe we have ſpecial intereſt in, or charge over, ſuch as St. *Paul*'s towards his *Corinthians*, (2 *Cor.* 11.2.) and *Job* his Children, (1. 5.) in reference to our admoniſhing, or other dealings with them, yet not to our judging and cenſuring them to others. And when the carriages of others are ſuch as no due candor can excuſe, we muſt rather interpret them better, than aggravate them as worſe, according to the favour of charity to the Offender, though in no wiſe to the Offence. Nor this without neceſſity, nor to every one blazoning others, nor of all alike, without reſpect to quality, age, temptations, and the like; of which, and all other circumſtances, conſideration muſt be had, and due allowance made.

In our rebuking and reproving of others; we muſt likewiſe ſee, that it be a matter ſo deſerving, and conſider the perſons we ſo deal with. (In counſel and admonition, though prudence be required, yet in them we aſſume not ſo much to our ſelves, nor apt ſo paſſionately to miſcarry.) Great need of this in Superiours, Maſters eſpecially towards Servants, and Schollers, that they deal with them according to their diſpoſitions, *forbearing*, (or as the Greek, *moderating*) *threatning*, Epheſ. 6. 9. and Prov.

Prov. 11.24. and Parents often towards Children; *Fathers provoke not your Children, left they be discouraged*, Colos. 3.21. And as great need of Superiors moderating their passion towards Inferiors, so great need of these using prudence towards those and their equals; *Rebuke not* (therefore saith *Paul* to *Timothy*, 1 Tim. 5. 1.) *an Elder, but intreat him as a Father, and the younger men as Brethren.*

2. *We must moderate our contests with others according to equity.* So long as sin, Satan, and *meum & tuum*, *thine and mine*, are in the World, there will be strife and contention about the things of the World. And where interest ingages us, we are subject to be byast thereby, and drawn away by our passions from all equality. Great need therefore of Moderation here: [1. *In considering the matter, that it be of moment, and the person we have to do withal, whether faulty*; and not about toys, and rashly with any that's next us, we think upon the blush guilty, enter the lists of contention and strife. *Go not forth hastily* (saith *Solomon*) *to strive, lest thou knowest not what to do in the end thereof, when thy Neighbour hath put thee to shame*, Prov. 25.8. [2. If so, *In trying by all fair means the obtaining thy right*, whether of estate, good name, honour, or the like, by arguments and perswasions, by seeking accommodation, by willingly referring it to the equal judgment and determination of others, or the like. *Agree* (saith our blessest Saviour, Mat. 5. 25.) *with thine Adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him*, (i. e. *to the Magistrate*, as *Luke* expounds it; 12. 58.) *lest at any time the Adversary deliver thee to the Judge, and the Judge deliver thee to the Officer, and thou be cast into Prison.* [3. If these will not prevail for thy right, *In voluntary yeelding some part thereof, rather than contest.* It must be thy own right thou must yeeld, not anothers, (except thou be intrusted therewith, and so far forth as he consents thereto); for this being a Gift, must be of such things as are our own, which thou oughtest to do for peace-sake. How eminent was *Abraham* for this, (*Gen.* 13.8,9.) who stood not upon his terms of superiority with *Lot*, though his Unkle and Guardian formerly and Governor, nor his right, nor his Nephews first seeking to him, and the like, but that there might be no strife, offers him his choice of the Land; *If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left*; and performs accordingly. How far are we from following our Father *Abraham*'s example! how many that will not yeeld others any of their right, but by compulsion of Law! how few that yeelds their own right voluntarily! How far, or how much we must yeeld, our own, and those we deal with, circumstances best determine.

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mine. We must not be injurious to our selves; for as St. *Austin* saith well, *Quis aliis æquus, qui sibi iniquus? Who that's unequal to himself, will be equal to others?* We must not yeeld that which is greatly to our detriment, except our yeelding be on as easie terms as further contesting, (as it proves often when we proceed to Law, *&c.*) and here that may be very considerable to one, that is but small to another, as poorer or richer, for matters of estate, as entring the stage of the World, or well known in it, for credit and good name, *&c.* And very considerable to the same man at one time, that may be small at another, as if upon preferment to have reports made of him, or the like. Nay, there may be grounds for not yeelding the least we can possibly obtain, which we must conceal from the Publick, (though we may satisfie private Christians) as when we know our estate is small, though (living upon credit) others judge it great, or the like cases. But here's not such difficulty, every one knowing his own circumstances, for the most part, pretty well, (which should be a ground for our charity, that we censure not men whose circumstances we know not); nor are we apt to miscarry in departing from our own interest. We should especially therefore consider the condition and circumstances those are in we have to do withal: If greater, we usually make a vertue of necessity, and yeeld most where we should yeeld least: but here, in our speeches and carriages, we should especially yeeld, and least we can of our purses, and on the contrary, if they be meaner and poorer. Not when others are low, or in present exigencies, to take them by the throat, saying, Pay me what thou owest, (*Mat.* 18.28.) but to be equal, merciful, and considerative of others as well as our selves, and accordingly to deal. 4. If all thou must yeeld will not satisfie, *In thy chargeable appeal to the Civil Magistrate.* As all lawful means must be assayed for publick Peace, before by War appeal be made to God; so should all lawful means be used before we appeal to his Vice-gerent, for private peace. And when we do, with charity to the person against whom we proceed; for 'tis a great mistake to think we cannot be in Charity and Law together. And though, with vigilance and circumspection, yet not with violence and passion to mannage the prosecution. Lastly, *In the issue or event of Appeals.* If we overcome, *In admitting equal compensation for the loss of Riches, Credit, or the like them contests about.* For some mens natures, others necessities, are such as make them obstinate, and persist to their ruine and destruction; and Laws in some things are severe (though just) which though the Magistrate moderate according to equity, yet often adjudge more than we should take. And if thou be

overcome

overcome and lose thy right; by no means seek revenge, or right thy self, but use Moderation, *in committing thy Cause to him that judgeth righteously.*

3. *We must moderate our whole carriage and conversation towards others, according to the rules of modesty and sobriety*, Prov. 25. 6. Avoid all occasions of giving just offence to others. Seek peace, and pursue it, but fly occasions of quarrelling and strife, lest the wrath both of God and man pursue thee. Consider that not only *hatred* and *wrath*, but *variance, emulation*, and *strife*, are reckoned amongst the works of the flesh, which *they that do, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God*: whiles *peace, long-suffering, gentleness*, and *meekness* (*fruits of the Spirit*) shall, *Gal.* 5. 20. — 23. Let not thy immodest looks efface others modesty, nor thy gestures offend their gravity. For St. *Ambrose* extends this Moderation to gestures, gate, and bodily motions; speaking also his own experience herein, how he refused to admit one into Orders, meerly for his immodesty in these. Let not then any taunting Jests, bitter Sarcasms, or any other words, or mymical Gestures, foolish Wagers, Recreations, or the like, become snares to entrap thy peace with others. *Finally, Brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest,* (or grave and venerable σεμνὰ) *whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things*, speak these things, do these things, *and the God of Peace shall be with you*, Phil. 4. 8, 9. Offic. l. 1. c. 18.

2. *Passively.* Thus we are considered in our suffering from others; wherein, as we must cordially forgive them all, *Matth.* 6. 15. So in our carriage, we must moderate our Spirits, Passions, Speeches, Actions, and punishing thereof, towards those that are the offenders.

1. *We must moderate our spirits, by an equal bearing with the weaknesses and natural infirmities of others. He that hath no rule over his own spirit, is like a City that is broken down, and without Walls*, Prov. 25. 28. *i. e.* soon overcome. We must consider their years, as the fervor of youth, testiness of old age, their temper: some are more dull and flegmatick, others more melancholly and suspicious; some more cholerick and boysterously passionate, others more agil quick and sprightly: their Education, some are with study morose, others, according to those they converse with, more rude, or complemental and courtly; according to which, and their present condition, we should give due grains of allowance, in our speeches and conversations towards them, and retain our equality of mind, as the Orator said, *Tranquillus animus meus, qui aequi-*

æqui boni facit omnia; [1. By a prudent dissembling them, 1 *Sam.* 10. 27. [2. By a charitable covering them, *Prov.* 10. 12. [3. Interpreting them; not putting any sinister interpretation, but most favourable, not aggravating the offence, 1 *Cor.* 13. 5, & 7. [4. Admonishing them, *Mat.* 18. 15. *Gal.* 6. 1. [Lastly, Pardoning them; *Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another*, &c. *Colos.* 3. 13.

2. *We must moderate our passions in their due exercise, in case of greater and wilful offences, according to the nature and quality thereof.* Our anger towards such Offenders, aversation of them, severity with them, and the like; avoiding of, and suppressing all wrath, envy, malice, revenge, and the like sinful passions, that have the stamp of Hell upon them, (*James* 3. 15.) which come thence, and lead thither, *Gal.* 5. 20, & 21. In Gods cause we must be angry, against sin; and in the publicks, against the impediments of peace and truth, *Neh.* 5. 6. *Acts* 17. 16. (but these I am not speaking of) in our own we may be angry, but we must not sin. Ephes. 4. 26. *Whosoever is angry with his Brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the Judgement*, saith our blessed Saviour, *Mat.* 5. 22. In which three things are considerable 1. With whom, and that's clearly the Offenders, not every one that's next us. 2. For what, Which the Philosopher, and all acknowledge, difficult to determine, being in particulars; the only help is from the consideration of the quality of the offence. 1. Not for every trifle, but material in its self, or in its consequence. 2. Not for natural defects and weaknesses, as when they are slow of parts, weak of strength, or the like, and can do no better; (here we may find fault, and admonish gently to quicken, not be angry, to discourage those we have power over, or interest in). 3. Nor for purely involuntary, and casual offences, such as no due circumspection could prevent, but for errors and mistakes which might have been avoided, carelessness and negligence in the doing or omission; wilfulness or maliciousness in the end for which others offend us. When these appear, and as they appear more or less, we may be angry; least for the first, more with the next, and most with the last of wilfulness and malice. Lastly, The measure of our passion is considerable, which must not be beyond the nature of such offences, in the degree or duration. *Be angry, and sin not*, (the same words in the Original, the *Septuagint* renders, *Psalm.* 4. 4. by, *stand in awe, and sin not*; when we are angry with others, we had need stand in awe of God that we sin not) *let not the Sun go down upon thy wrath, neither give place to the Devil*, Ephes. 4. 26, 27. *i. e.* we must neither too deeply, nor too long be angry, lest the

Devil

Devil, who is ready at hand to take occasion thereat, to blow us all into a flame of Wrath, Malice, Revenge, and what not; all which are to be wholly avoided.

3. We must moderate our speeches and actions towards such wilful Offenders. *By no means rendering railing for railing, or evil for evil, but overcoming evil with good.* Oh that our blessed Saviour's known Precept was but as well known in the practice! *Mat.* 7. 44, &c. and that his Copy was but writ after by us; how would the World be reformed thereby! If those many places of holy Scripture, of forbearing, and forgiving one another, under the penalty of damnation, were duly believed, they would marvelously restrain men at least, and becalm the World. But let's see our practice.

1. *By a prudent silence, or slighting the presumptuous Offenders of us; when secret, or not greatly to our detriment.* Not to hearken or regard every reproach, scorn, contempt that's cast upon us, nor every trespass of our Neighbour, 2 *Sam.* 16. 10. *The discretion of a man deferreth his anger, and 'tis his glory to pass over a transgression,* Prov. 19. 11. It is his glory, not only as it shews a spirit above such dealings, but wisdom many times more ashaming and silencing such thereby, than by our contending with them.

2. *By yielding to the unequal demands of others for peace, wherein we are solely concerned, and not greatly prejudiced.* How eminent is our Saviours example herein; who though free from tribute, yet rather than he would offend, works a Miracle for the solution thereof, *Matth.* 17. 27. He fairly shews first that he is so, and then notwithstanding pays; whose wisdom and practice herein let us follow.

3. *By admitting equal compensation, or less than our wrong, for such manifest injuries, as we may and ought to right our selves in, when the Offender is willing to make us satisfaction.* If in our Reputation, let's not insist too much upon the punctilio's of honour; if in estate, upon the strict terms of right; but herein observe the the golden Rule, by putting off *self*, and putting on thy *Neighbour*, doing to him as thou wouldest he should do to thee, *Mat.* 7. 12. Nay, in real wrongs of estate, we should, in case of their incapacity of recompencing, accept for present verbal satisfaction, till they be better inabled, and if never, to lose all, rather than by imprisonment, or otherwise, to bring upon them (and often theirs also) utter destruction, *Matth.* 18. 29, 30. For the Moralist well τὸ δίκαιον ἴσον, but not τὸ ἴσον δίκαιον, though all Justice be equal, yet all equality is not Justice, but that which is proportioned to persons. Plut. *Symp.* l. 8.

4. Lastly, *We must moderate our prosecution of such injuries and wrongs, as we ought to vindicate our selves from, and see punished.* Though we must forgive all injuries, as to our selves, by charity to others; yet we may, nay, we must in some cases have so much charity also to the Publick, and our selves, that in notorious injuries, we should do right to both, in the prosecution of such Offenders, as will not otherwise be restrained, or do us right. If thy Brother sin against thee, not only seven, but seventy seven times a day, thou must forgive him, *Matth.* 18. 22. *i. e.* If he frequently wrong and injure thee, (for so the word *sinning*, when against us, signifies, as the *Sept.* 1 *Sam.* 19. 4. *Gen.* 42, 22. and elsewhere frequently use the *greek* words, ἐὰν ἁμάρτῃ εἰς σὲ ὁ ἀδελφός σου, *If any man trespass against his Neighbour*, that is, injure or wrong him) yet thou must constantly forgive him; but notwithstanding thou mayest seek thy right from him, and if by no fair means canst obtain it, prosecute him before the Magistrate for the same. *Nay, thou not only mayest, but sometimes must.*

1. *When God is concerned therein, as in the Churches right.* Thus *Moses*, though the meekest man upon earth, would *not abate Pharaoh an hoof*, (Exod. 10. 26.) *for thereof must we serve the Lord*, (saith he) *and we know not with what, until we come thither*, i. e. *Canaan*. A Minister may yeeld his own, but he must not the Churches right.

2. *In case of trust from others.* Either from the Publick, or private persons, which allow us not to make terms of concession, but stand upon strict justice and right. Here, so far as others consent which are proprietors, we should compose, yeeld, and take up controversies; further we justly cannot: for in cases of trust, a man must be regulated by the will of those that intrust him, as Arbitrators and Sollicitors for others. So Executors frequently, and Guardians, that are intrusted for those that are young, and not yet, *sui juris*, at age to consent, and dispose of their own, and the like cases, wherein the intrusted are responsible for what is not legally done therein; the Laws determination being by all presumed just.

3. *In our own personal injuries, wherein the Publick is concerned.* 1. When publick Peace, Order and Government, are much violated and broken thereby. As in notorious Thefts, attempts of Murder, and the like; which if tolerated, the World would become a great *Latrocinium*, and Slaughter-house, wherein the longest Sword, and strongest Arm, would sweep away all; a place for Beasts, but no quiet habitation for Men. 2. When the publick emolument or estimation suffers in our injuries. As Magistrates, Ministers, and all others imployed in publick Affairs, when

when grosly defam'd, so as the Publick is thereby reflected on; ought fairly to vindicate their integrity, so far at least, that those that imploy them, and the Publick suffer not thereby. And lastly, When thy serving the Publick, and consequently the publick Good is thereby hindred. How ample is the Apostle *Paul* in his own vindication against the false Apostles defamation of him, in his second Epistle to the *Corinths*, which is much of it Apologetical. And good reason, for where the person is traduced, his employment is not likely to be much effectual, or advantagious to the Publick, and his Example less; as *Quintilian*, and many others, yea, constant experience tells us. In these cases thou must do thy self justice, but so moderately, as not doing to others injustice thereby. L. 2. Instit. c. 3.

In all other meerly personal wrongs and injuries, when they are considerable in themselves, or their issue to *thee*, provided thou canst no other way obtain right, thou mayest publickly prosecute thine Injusers, Oppressors, publick Defamers, and the like wrongers of thy Estate, Reputation, and other thy temporal good things; in charity, and according to equity; equally seeking thy own right and good, not thy Neighbours wrong, much less ruine and destruction. And thus for moderation towards others in civil matters.

In Religious Matters.

Although I have spoken in the opening the nature of Moderation, and the *general Object* that which might serve to direct us herein: Yet lest I be mistaken, and thence any of you mistake your duty; I shall further open this *particular Object*, by speaking to it negatively about what Moderation is not to be practised, and positively wherein it must.

Negatively. 1. *Not in matters of Faith.* For the believing these, being not onely absolutely required of every Christian, and in that measure that we cannot fully come up to, in regard of the great truth and reality of spiritual Objects, and their Revelation, (the best being (alas!) miserably short and deficient herein:) but also internal, (the profession of these being matter of practice) Moderation cannot possibly here have any place, much less that which respects others.

2. *Nor in matters of moral practise*, such as the moral Law requires, and grace and vertue should perform. For in these can be no excess, either in degree or duration. We cannot love God too much, nor with Grace our Neighbour, nor too constantly. Consider Father, Mother, Wife, Children, *as moral Objects*, so we exceed not, *as natural Goods*; and so in the exercise of natural affection, we frequently (as is said before) do ex-

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ceed, which is discernable especially by the end; with Grace we love them for God; with the moral vertue of love, for the relation they stand in to us; with the affection of love, when we sinfully over-love them for our loves: for though the natural affection co-operates with the former, yet it solely exceeds. But it being difficult for us to discern these *formalities* in Objects, and the operations of Principles about them, it is our only way to have recourse to God's Laws, (which though founded upon the nature of things, yet shew us plainly our duty, where we cannot discern them) which, in all things wherein we may exceed, (as in the Externals of the first Table, and the duties of the second) not only prescribe us what, and also particularly how to act by positive Precepts; but, lest we should miscarry, by Negative also, which respect the end, manner, measure, *&c.* of such duties, restraining and bounding us that we exceed not. Both which are Moral, and comprehended in this particular, it being equally moral not to over-love, as to love thy Neighbour; the former being forbidden, as well by the Negative, as the latter enjoyned by positive Precepts.

In Negatives, which forbid the action *absolutely*, (as Blasphemy, Adultery, *&c.*) no need of any such Precepts to regulate us; for the actions being not to be done, no need of direction for their manner, and consequently no place for Moderation; such being to be subdued, and suppress't, not ordered or regulated, as I have formerly spoken, and in things onely *indefinitely* forbidden, (as Swearing, Travelling on the Lord's day, *&c.*) when we are to practise them, we have the Rules for Positive Actions, Affirmative, and Negative, to direct us sufficiently.

3. *Nor especially in the weightier matters of the Law or Religion.* I must speak a little to this; because that may be commanded *absolutely* in it self, which *comparatively*, when it comes in competition with other duties of greater moment, becomes onely conditional. For affirmative Precepts are so many, it is impossible they should bind *ad semper*; so that when two or more duties come together, man, in regard of his finite capacity, being not able to perform them at once, must duly consider the weightiest, and that do; it being requisite, in terms of inconsistency, that the lesser alwayes give place to the greater, and cease *pro hic & nunc*, or for that present to oblige us. Thus *Davids* eating the Shew-bread, and the Disciples plucking the Ears of Corn on the Sabbath day, when hungry, is defended by our Saviour, *Mat.* 12. Yea, even frequently the externals of the first Table, give way to the weighty exigent duties of the Second, (as the sanctification of the Sabbath,

to

to the defending the City in the *Maccabees* case) according to that, *I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, Hos.* 6.6. Not only *rather than* sacrifice, but in such cases *not* sacrifice. God dispensing with the lesser, so that its omission becomes no sin; as is clear, in our Saviours practice, in his healing the man with the withered hand, *&c.* as well as in his defence of his Disciples, *Luk.* 6. For that may be our duty, and necessary at one time, which at another (when a weightier comes that should take place) ceaseth to be so, by vertue of the reason and constitution of the Laws themselves, that the Superiour Law take place.

Therefore under the notion of moderation, to omit moral, and especially the great and necessary duties required, and practise only the less, is Pharisaical Hypocrisie, not Christianity. If to do the great duties of Religion, God requires of us, be accounted immoderateness, let us say with *David, If this be to be vile, we will be more vile still.* God's Laws admit of no ἐπιείκεια, or dispensation from us, but what he hath admitted himself, we must neither add or detract, *Deut.* 4.2. Thou canst neither mitigate their execution, nor any other besides himself, on thee for thy transgressing them. If the wise *Romans* were so careful to preserve their Laws from others, than the supream dispensing with them, lest they should prove a *Lesbian* rule; much more the Great and Wise God hath reason to keep up the authority of his Laws, and expect our punctual observance of them. Moderation in Religion, and religious Duties, is the deviliſh Precept of *Machiavel*, not the Doctrine of the Gospel, or St. *Paul*. To engage or wade no further in Religion, than temporal interests will permit us to come safely again to shore, was the resolution and speech of a greater Courtier of *France*, than of Heaven: and of such as resolve more to save their Skins than their Souls. How doth Christ every where arm those that will be his Disciples, against their desisting from their necessary duty, for the offence of the World? Is so far from concealing this, that it is the first thing he tells them of, invites them upon no other terms than the Cross; tells them, they must trust him in this World, for compensating them in the future, *&c.* *Mat.* 16. from 24. to *ult.* And how eminent was he in the practice of this? How did the zeal of God's House eat him up, and he persist in doing the work he was sent about, notwithstanding all the offence the Jews took? And yet in his own private concerns, how meek, gentle, patient, which none can be ignorant of that read the Gospel, and which he commands us to learn of him, *Mat.* 11.18. Great then is the mistake of those that think Zeal and Moderation (which were thus eminently concerned in Christ) should be inconsistent. No lovelier match than of this blessed couple

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couple in our Souls; nor of more universal use to us throughout the course of our lives, if rightly ordered, the one for God, the other for the World; that giving life and intensness in our duties towards him, this restraining us in our personal Concernments; that edging and quickening us in desires, motions, and endeavours for Heaven, and this stopping us, and retarding the Wheels, when we drive too furiously after our own interests: that, according to knowledge, supplying us with resolution for, and fervor in the great Duties of Religion; this, according to charity, duly qualifying them in the less; that our love to God, and one another, may walk hand in hand Heaven-ward, and neither leave the other behind.

Positively. It must then be in matters of Opinion, and Christian Liberty, and Indifferency, as they all refer to practice. And here let none expect I should determine what things are onely matters of Opinion, Liberty, and Indifferency, (which so much trouble the World) what not; For every one herein must, according to the Scriptures, be in some respect Judge for himself and his own practice, 1 *Cor.* 10.29. *Rom.* 14.4, 12. Upon which I shall proceed, and shew our moderation, in *Principles, Passions, Speeches,* and *Practices.*

1. *We must moderate our Principles or Judgments concerning these, by forming them according to the nature of Truths and Duties.* This is necessary, not only in regard of our selves, (for as the judgement, such is the practice) but others also, for the moderating our prejudices towards them. We must therefore carefully distinguish between matters of Faith, and necessary Duty; and matters of Opinion, and conditional Practice. For though every ray of truth be excellent in it self, & absolutely there be no *minimum in Religione*, as the Heathen said; yet comparatively there is great difference in Truths, some differing from others, as one Star from another in glory. Nor have all the like clearness of revelation, nor shine forth with that lustre as others, nor all alike consequence. Some are βαρύτερα νόμου, great in themselves, clear to us, and weighty in their consequence, *Mat.* 23.23. These we must hold fast, practise carefully, contend for earnestly, 1 *Tim.* 1.19. 2 *Tim.* 1.13. *Jude* 3. Others are such, as *salva Religione*, we may, and do differ in, both in judgment and practice, without the endangering our happiness, *For the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*, Rom. 14.17. *i.e.* In the opinion or practice of those, the false Apostles would have obtruded as necessary. In these things, our Principles should give us leave to meet one another in our Practice; keeping the Unity of the Spirit in the former, and the Bond of Peace by

by the latter, as the Apoſtle enjoyns, *Epheſ.* 4. 3.

2. *We muſt moderate our paſſions in theſe, our heat and fervor for them, our anger againſt thoſe that differ from us in them.* In theſe things, wherein the way to Heaven is broad enough, there may be difference without diviſion; and let any take heed how they ſtraiten it, taking upon them to be wiſer than Chriſt, who well knowing humane frailty, ſo chalked it out to us, telling us, *He that doth the Will of his Father* (not that is for or againſt theſe things) *is his Brother, Siſter, and Mother*; and conſequently ſhould be Brethren and Siſters amongſt themſelves. It is ſtrange to conſider, how upon principles and prejudice once ſuckt in, Paſſion blinds men in their own opinions and practices, and what woful diviſions hath in all Ages ariſen thence? That the Eaſtern and Weſtern Churches, wherein were ſo many Grave, Holy, Learned, and Wiſe Men, ſhould ſo fall out as to make a ſeparation; every one would be ready to think and ſay, Surely it was ſome great matter that occaſioned it; would you know? nothing but about the time of the obſervation of *Eaſter*. Though *Irenæus* & others were mighty Advocates for Peace, yet nothing would ſerve *Victor* Biſhop of *Rome*, but exact Uniformity in theſe indifferences; and thence aroſe, about two hundred years after Chriſt, that great breach of Unity betwixt thoſe two great and famous Churches. How doth all the zeal and fervor we ſhould beſtow upon the great things of Religion run out at this time amongſt us about theſe things! May not I ſay, *Quorſum hæc perditio?* Wherefore do ye ſpend your mony for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which ſatisfieth not? Why do we ſtand thus buſily hewing good Timber into Chips; and leaving out the Figures, ſpend our time in the bare Cyphers? How many, on both ſides, at this day, make it their Religion to be for or againſt thoſe things that they account indifferent in themſelves? So true is the *Moraliſts* obſervation, that the Devil alwayes labors, *That mankind may either wholly neglect a Deity, or be wholly taken up in the Externals of Worſhip.* Quite contrary to Scripture, that teacheth us to mind every thing as of conſequence in its place; to do the great and weighty things, and not to leave the other undone. *My beloved, the wrath of man worketh not the righteouſneſs of God:* When *Eliiah*, that good Prophet, was diſcontented, 1 *King.* 19. and paſſionately requeſts he may die, *v.* 4. and profeſſeth his zeal for the great things of Religion, *v.* 10. God paſſeth by him, but in the great and ſtrong Wind, or in the Earthquake or in the Fire the Lord was not, but *in the ſtill ſmall voice*, *v.* 11, 12. ſhewing him, and us thereby, that he is not in our Paſſions; and if not for the great, how much leſs for theſe things of Religion; wherein

wherein the Apostles rule for peace and edification (*Rom.* 14. 19.) should be observed. God never suspended his Churches peace upon these: for if I should not love others, till I knew they were of all my opinions, and my practice in these, I might perhaps never love any.

2. *We must moderate our speeches, in our discourses of, debates and contests for or against these.* Some speeches we are too apt to, we must wholly forbear, others we must moderate. 1. We must beware of judging and censuring others for these. We may, in apparent transgressions of Gods Law, censure upon occasion the Offenders, though not rashly, or for Hypocrites, Reprobates, or the like; but for these we must not at all, *Rom.* 14. 4, *&c.* For in these, through anothers knowledge that may not be a sin in him which would to thee, and thou judgest sinful therefore in others for want of charity. How much malice, and how little candor do we use in this! How do we almost make it the characteristical note of Christianity, to be of such or such a way which none account essential to Religion! We are apt (as those in *Africa*, in *Tertullians* time) to account it enough, that we or others are of such a Party; and to impale the Church, and impropriate Christ and Salvation every one of us to our own side. And this many times the most, by the Vulgar: so true is that of *Seneca*, *Qui pauca respiciunt, facile pronunciant*; Those that discern the least, being apt to judge most. 2. We must take heed of despising and contemning others for these, *Rom.* 14. 3. As the former of not judging, so this of not despising, is a necessary duty internally as to our selves, and in our carriage and speeches especially, as they respect our external duty towards others; our sinning in both arising from uncharitableness, in that to others liberty, in this to that we judge their weakness. Our hearts and tongues are too apt to follow our judgments, and break out in these exorbitancies; but, *my Brethren*, these things ought not so to be; judge not, censure not according to outward appearance, or inward prejudice, but righteous and charitable judgment, rather that we mutually bear with one another in these. And when we have occasion to discourse or debate concerning what things are such, or their practice; not measuring all mens judgments by the model of our own apprehensions; or like Dictators, thinking our selves infallible, obtrude those things for necessary, which it may be, others of as piercing sight account but indifferent; or those things for indifferent, which they reckon amongst the number of unlawfuls, but modestly declaring our judgments herein. For, as I told you in the entrance, I take not upon me to determine what are such, nor the Magistrates duty, (concerning which, I think he said well and wisely, *That*

it

it were good they require as little as they can, (what's neceſſary for the ſafe-guard of Religion, as contained in the Scriptures) *and Subjects practiſe as much as they can)* but onely for the direction of every one how to order their converſation in the diverſity of Judgments that are amongſt us.

4. *We muſt moderate our practiſing of theſe, according to the circumſtances we are in, and as they are convenient and expedient for us.* Sometimes the practice of theſe muſt be wholly waved; for the Laws concerning them being *conditional*, as to their doing or not doing, (though not as to the manner thereof) and not *abſolute*, as of neceſſary duties, their practice becomes ſuſpended on ſuch conditions; which (beſides that I formerly mentioned, *viz.* when they come in competition with greater matters) are eſpecially three. In regard of our ſelves, diſſatisfaction of *Conſcience*; In regard of others, *known ſcandal*, and *diſturbance of publick ſetled peace.* When any of theſe caſes occur, wherein the condition on which the command is ſuſpended is wanting, the command there (as all other conditionals) becomes *negative.* For we are obliged abſolutely in moral duties to do them, and for the manner rightly, they being no wayes ſuſpended as to practiſe; but in theſe only abſolutely for the manner, that if we do them, we do them rightly; and conditionally, if we be ſatisfied in our judgments, and offend not others thereby, or diſturb the publick peace; the firſt being knowledge in our ſelves, the other two charity to others, if we do them. And therefore where there is no place left for charity to others, as in caſe of equal ſcandal on both hands, thy doing or forbearing, there thou art at liberty. In which caſe, in ſmaller matters, that which is leaſt obſervable is beſt; in greater matters, according to thy concernments, and charity to thy ſelf, and for general good, (if the Publick be intereſted in thee). For when we cannot know on which ſide, our doing, or not doing, moſt evil to others lies, charity to our ſelves preponderates ſuppoſals of the iſſue.

But time permits me not to launch out into Diſcourſes of theſe caſes, my Subject alſo confining me to the exerciſe of Moderation, which when the action is to be wholly omitted, is not required, its office being only (as I have often ſaid) in the regulating of actions. As we muſt therefore uſe modeſty in our ſpeeches for or againſt theſe, ſo alſo in our practiſing them according to conveniency and expediency; not too violently running our ſelves out of breath, or a-tilt at others, in our practiſing them, but with that equalneſs of ſpirit and candor towards others as becomes us, *Rom.* 14. 19, & 23. *1 Cor.* 11. 16.

Thus I have done with the *Caſe*, wherein I have been too large (I confeſs) in the whole, though perhaps too ſhort in ſeveral particulars, and I hope not very tedious in any. A little more time for that which remains, will give a releaſe to my pains and your patience.

The Perſons. For the third General, the Perſons. [1. *Who* muſt exerciſe this Moderation, and that's in a word, *all*. [2. *To whom*, and that's alſo *all* with whom we have to do, of all ranks, degrees, and qualities, *Superiors* and Inferiors, as well as Equals, of all tempers and carriages; not only to the gentle, but alſo to the froward; not only to Friends, and thoſe equal and fair to us; for then what ſingular thing do we? but to thoſe that are, or we repute our Enemies, that deſpitefully hate us, and injuriouſly perſecute us, as our Saviour teacheth, *Mat.* 5.44. [3. *Before whom*, and that's expreſt in the Text, *all men*; our converſation *in* all the good and the evil things of this life, and towards all, muſt to all that ſee, and obſerve, or hear thereof, be known to be moderate.

Reaſons. The fourth General, or the equity of this Command, which I ſhall ſhew for that towards perſons, (waving that towards things, both in this, and application, (as I told you) being by many ſufficiently handled) in three particulars.

1. *This is no other than what God himſelf exerciſes towards us*; In all his dealings with mankind, from the fall, to the conſummation and end of the World. This doth eminently, and alwayes will appear, ſo that good reaſon we ſhould do it, *That we may be the Children of our Heavenly Father*, (Mat. 5.45.) who ſpareth us continually, when we offend and ſin againſt him. If God was not more moderate than man, the World would quickly crack about our ears; for if man had power to his will, it would ſcarcely be habitable; but he that hath power, if he ſhould but exerciſe it even juſtly, and not uſe moderation, it would no longer be inhabited. *Thou wicked Servant, I forgave thee all, ſhouldeſt not thou have had compaſſion on thy fellow-ſervant?* Mat. 18.32,33.

2. *Chriſt did uſe Moderation eminently towards us, and hath left us his example to follow, in our exerciſing it towards one another.* Though he was *equal with God, yet made himſelf of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a Servant, and humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto death, even to the death of the Croſs*, Phil. 2.7. whoſe example how pathetically doth the Apoſtle urge, *v.* 1, 2. *That nothing be done through ſtrife or vain-glory, but in lowlineſs of mind, eſteeming others better than our ſelves; not looking every man on his own things, but the things of others*, v. 3, 4. likewiſe *Mat.* 11.25. and many other places well known.

3. *Becauſe we have all need of this from one another*; We are all men ſubject

ſubject to like paſſions; nay, uſually thoſe that need it moſt from others, uſe it leaſt; ſuch as are paſſionate and boiſterous, and though good men, yet as a wiſe man ſaid of one of ſuch a rugged temper, *Though he had Grace enough for ſeven others, yet had little enough for himſelf.* But yet if there be any ſo equal tempered by Nature, ſo poliſhed by Education, ſo ruled by Grace in all things, and towards all, that he hath no need of moderation from others, let him take the firſt ſtone, and violently throw at his Neighbour. Read, I pray, *Matth.* 18. from *v.* 21. to the end, which is the great Scripture for our Moderation to one another, and is moſt ample therein, where you will ſee both the equity and neceſſity thereof to Salvation.

For the laſt particular, which is the Uſe and Application of this Moderation towards one another.

1. *Uſe of Information.* That it is not enough that we have Moderation, (which all pretend to, though few practiſe) but we muſt ſhew it; nay, not only ſhew it ſparingly, or at ſome times, and to ſome, but uſually, frequently, conſtantly, and to all men. *Uſe.*

Uſe 2. Therefore of *Exhortation.* Wherein let me plead with you a little, for Moderation towards one another, this ſo much awanting, and yet ſo neceſſary Duty, beſides the equitableneſs thereof in the *Reaſons*, conſider briefly the neceſſity, utility, and jucundity thereof.

1. *How neceſſary?* Are there not *ſupervenes*, or difficulties? Have all the like apprehenſions? Is not the ballance of Reaſon very deceitful? Are any of us infallible? Nay, doth not the pretence thereto declare the contrary?

2. *How profitable is this to us all?* Moderation doth not a little conduce to the health of our bodies, as the great *Hippocrates* and Experience tells us; nothing more deſtroying us, than not onely immoderateneſs in things, but our paſſions againſt others; and not leſs to the peace and tranquility of our minds, for the enjoyment of our ſelves; and moſt to the ſerving and enjoying of God. If good *Jonah* be in a paſſion, he is not only weary of his life, but his praying is nothing but quarrelling with God, *Jonah* 4. Nay, it hath an eſpecial promiſe both from God and Chriſt; *The meek ſhall inherit the earth,* Pſal. 36. 11. whom our Saviour therefore pronounceth *bleſſed,* Matth. 5. 5. Whoſoever therefore may curſe them, or count them fools for the ſame, he having bleſſed them, bleſſed they ſhall be.

3. *How ſweet and pleaſant a thing is Moderation, both to our ſelves and others?* It being the foundation of that ſweet Fellowſhip and Communion of Saints, which is one great Article of our Creed.

Val. Max. l. 9. c. 5.

Experience tells every one how ſweet the Fruit of Moderation is, ſo that Felicity and it (as the Heathen ſaid) conſtantly dwell together, in Families, in Nations, all the World over. Without it, this World would be a Deſert, barren of all comfort, and nothing but a vaſt howling Wilderneſs for Bears and Wolves, not civil Men or Chriſtians to dwell in. Let therefore the *neceſſity* of Moderation perſwade thee, let its *profit* and *pleaſure* draw and allure thee to the practice thereof.

Laſtly, To theſe Motives, let me add that of the Text, *The Lord is at hand.* For ſo I look upon this, and all other Arguments ſubjoyned to Exhortations and Commands; for though they be materially Reaſons to convince, yet are formally Motives to perſwade and quicken us to the Duties enjoyned. Fleſh and blood may ſay, others are inſolent, and the more we are ready to bear, the more they are apt to injure us; as the Heathens to the Chriſtians of old cryed; *Bleſſed are the poor*, and ſo plundered them: Therefore *Utulandum inter lupos*, we muſt retaliate like for like. Oh no, ſaith the Apoſtle, ἐγγὺς ἐγγύς, the Lord is nigh to obſerve them, and how they carry in his Family; whoſe wiſdom governs their petulancy, and whoſe power and goodneſs can overcome all their malice and unkindneſs; is nigh to obſerve thee, and to help thee in his due time, if injured; and is nigh alſo to judge both, to puniſh thoſe that miſcarry, (*Matth.* 18. 34, 35.) and reward thoſe that herein are his Children. The not believing this, *that the Lord is at hand*, in his Providence, and with his Judgement, is the great reaſon of the want of Moderation in the World. Let us therefore all live under a continual ſence of this, and all pray for, and practiſe *moderation*. *Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compaſſion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous; not rendring evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwiſe bleſſing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye ſhould inherit a bleſſing,* (1 Pet. 3. 8, 9.) *and that the Lord is at hand, ready to beſtow it upon all thoſe that make their moderation known unto all men.*

How

How may we have ſutable Conceptions of God in duty?

Gen. 18. 27.

And Abraham anſwered and ſaid, Behold, now I have taken upon me to ſpeak unto the Lord, which am but Duſt and Aſhes.

THis Text preſents to us, *Abraham*'s ſtanding before the Lord, pleading for the preſervation of the Righteous, in the deſtruction of *Sodom*, and for the preſervation of *Sodom* (if poſſible) from deſtruction, for the Righteous ſake.

That which we have in it, more eſpecially to take notice of in reference to this preſent Exerciſe, is with what apprehenſions or conceptions of God, *Abraham* did ſpeak to God, did deport himſelf towards God, did manage this great undertaking with God. Concerning which, four things preſent themſelves for our Obſervation;

1. That thoſe Apprehenſions or Conceptions *Abraham* had of God, did highly exalt and magnifie the greatneſs and excellency of God in his heart; — *Behold, now I have taken upon me to ſpeak unto the Lord*; One who hath Excellency, and Soveraignty, and Majeſty, and Dominion, and Power, and Glory.

2. That they were ſuch Conceptions of God, as did humble, vilifie, and abaſe *Abraham* in himſelf in compariſon of God; — *I have taken upon me to ſpeak unto the Lord, which am but Duſt and Aſhes*; a ſinful, weak, worthleſs, frail piece of vanity and mortality.

3. That they were ſuch Conceptions of God, as did repreſent him Gracious, Propitious, Benevolous to the Creature, notwithſtanding the

the greatneſs and excellency of God, and the meanneſs and unworthineſs of the Creature: Thus much ſeems to be comprehended in the Note of Admiration, *Behold*! — O what admirable condeſcention is this in the Great God! O what wonderful Mercy and Grace is this, that ſuch a poor vile Creature ſhould have liberty to ſpeak to him, to parley with him!

4. That they were ſuch apprehenſions of God, as did beget in *Abraham* a Faith of Acceptation with God in the performance of that duty, without which it had been dangerous preſumption in him, *who was but duſt and aſhes, to take upon him to ſpeak unto the Lord.*

This Example of *Abraham* I ſhall endeavour to draw forth for our Practice and Imitation; He who is made to us a Pattern of Faith, may be to us a Pattern of true Worſhip; and ſuch apprehenſions or conceptions *Abraham* had of God in ſpeaking to him, ſuch conceptions of God we are to have in our Prayers and performances to him.

For which end I ſhall lay down this general Propoſition.

Doct. *That ſuch as ſpeak to God, or ſpeak of God; ſuch as draw near to God, or have to do with God in any part of Divine Worſhip, muſt manage all their performances, with apprehenſions and due conceptions of God.*

The truth of this General Propoſition, I ſhall endeavour to manifeſt and make clear, by laying down four particular Propoſitions, which muſt give evidence to it.

The firſt Propoſition is this, That we cannot have any true, right apprehenſions, or conceptions of God, except we have a true knowledge of him; Such as have not known God, have ſlighted him; *Who is the Lord*, ſaith *Pharaoh*, *that I ſhould obey him? I know not the Lord*, *Exod.* 5. 2. Such as know not God, nor deſire to know him, are ſo far from drawing near to God, that they drive him as far from them as they can; they ſay unto the Almighty, *Depart from us, who deſire not the knowledge of his wayes*, Job 21. 14.

What counſel *Eliphaz* gave *Job*, (whom he ſuppoſed to be a greater ſtranger to God than indeed he was) may be an uſeful inſtruction to us, *Job* 22. 21. *Acquaint thy ſelf with God.* — To know God, and to be known of God, is our higheſt privilege; *Acquaint thy ſelf with God, and be at peace.* The reaſon why any are real enemies to God, is, becauſe they know not God; and the reaſon why many think God is an enemy to them, is, becauſe they are not acquainted with God ſo intimately as they ſhould; *Acquaint thy ſelf with God* (ſaith he) — and thereby good ſhall come unto thee: But what good? And how ſhall this good come? It is partly expreſt, *v.* 22, 23, 24, 25. but more fully,

v. 26,

v. 26, 27. *For then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, and shalt lift up thy face to God; Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy vows*; So that except we know God aright, and have some acquaintance with him, we cannot delight our selves in God, we cannot make our prayer to him, nor lift up our face unto him.

The second Proposition is, That we cannot know any thing, savingly of God, further than he is pleased to manifest and make known himself to us; No man can make known God, but God himself: *Moses*, who had seen as much of God's glory as any man, when he desired a further manifestation of God's glory, in a higher measure or degree than formerly he had seen, he goes to God himself for it, *Exod.* 33. 18. *I beseech thee shew me thy glory.*

The great Promise Christ maketh to them that love him and keep his Commandments, is the manifestation of himself to them by Himself, *Joh.* 14. 21. — I will manifest my self to them, for none else can; A Disciple puts a Question to him about it, *v.* 22. *Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thy self to us, and not to the World?* We have a clear answer to this, *Luk.* 10. 21. This very Doctrine which is so much matter of indignation to the wise and prudent of the World, is matter of rejoycing and exaltation to the Spirit of Christ; and he said, *I thank thee, O Father, that thou hast hid — and thou hast revealed — For so it seemed good in thy sight*: Hence is that of our Saviour, *John* 17. 25. *O righteous Father, the World hath not known thee, but these have known —*

The third Proposition is, That the clearest manifestations of God to us, and such as can beget in us right apprehensions and due conceptions of him, are made out to us, In and By Jesus Christ. *John* 1. 18. *No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosome of the Father, he hath declared him*; Therefore no man ever did, or can apprehend any thing of God truly, that is, upon a saving account, but in and by Jesus Christ.

The Divine Essence or Godhead, *No man hath seen, or can see in it self*, 1 Tim. 6. 16.

Something of this Eternal God-head, is manifested in the Works of Creation, *Rom.* 1. 20. *The invisible things of God*, viz. *his Eternal Power and God-head*, are clearly seen in the things that are made; But yet this knowledge of God in the Creature, could not bear down the vain imaginations, or idolatrous conception of God in mens hearts, as appears *vers.* 21, 23.

Much of the Eternal God-head, is manifested in the Works of Providence;

vidence; *God doth great things paſt finding out, and wonders without number; Yet lo, he goeth by us, and we ſee him not; he paſſeth on alſo, but we perceive him not*, Job 9.10,11. God is inviſible in himſelf, and incomprehenſible in his works; *Job* made it his work to trace God in his works, *Job* 23.8,9. Sometimes God was working forward, or before him; ſometimes backward, or behind him; ſometimes on his right hand, ſometimes at his left hand. *Job* follows him up and down if he might apprehend him, and the reaſon and deſign of God in all his works, but he could not perceive him, God hid himſelf from him.

Much more of the Eternal God-head was manifeſted in his moſt Righteous and Holy Law; but the manifeſtations of God here affrighted them that ſaw it; the People cry out, *Let not the Lord ſpeak any more to us, leſt we die*; and *Moſes* himſelf ſaid, *I exceedingly fear*; ſo terrible was the ſight of God there, *Heb.* 12.21.

Hence it will follow, that the cleareſt, ſweeteſt, moſt comfortable manifeſtations of God to us, and ſuch as can beget in us right apprehenſions and conceptions of God, are made out to us onely in *Jeſus* Chriſt, who is the Image of the Inviſible God, *Coloſ.* 1.15. In whom God hath made ſuch diſcoveries of himſelf, as can no where be ſeen but in Chriſt; He is the expreſs Image or Character of his Fathers Perſon, *Heb.* 1.3. The exact reſemblance of all his Fathers excellencies in their utmoſt perfections; therefore when *Philip* deſired him to ſhew them of the Father, to give them a ſight to ſatisfaction, *John* 14.9,10. *He that hath ſeen me*, (ſaith Chriſt to him) *hath ſeen the Father*; *Believe it* Philip, *I am in the Father, and the Father is in me.*

In the Works of Creation, God is a God above us; In his Works of Providence, a God without us; In the Law, a God againſt us; In himſelf, a God inviſible to us; Onely in Chriſt he is *Emmanuel*, God manifeſted in our fleſh, God in us, God with us, God for us.

Hence follows the fourth Propoſition, That the manifeſtations of God to us in Chriſt, are thoſe which alone can beget thoſe due apprehenſions, and right Conceptions of God, with which we muſt draw near to him, and perform all our worſhip to him.

As *Abraham* is held forth to us a Pattern of Faith; ſo he may be to us a Pattern of Worſhip, in as much as all true Worſhip to God is performed by Faith, by Faith in Chriſt: Such apprehenſions therefore *Abraham* had of God in his Worſhip, ſuch apprehenſions of God we are to have in our Worſhip; and as *Abraham* had thoſe conceptions of God by Faith in Chriſt, ſo can we have the like conceptions of God by Faith in Chriſt only.

1. Thoſe

1. Thoſe apprehenſions *Abraham* had of God did beget (as we have ſhewn) high thoughts of God, with ſuch apprehenſions of God we muſt perform all our worſhip; ſee what high thoughts of God his people have always had in worſhipping him, *Neh.* 9. 5, 6. 1 *Tim.* 1.17. 1 *Tim.* 6. 16.

Low thoughts of God will ever perform but low, baſe, contemptible Service and Worſhip; they brought God the blind, the lame, the ſick for Sacrifice, *Mal.* 1. *Go*, ſaith God, *preſent them to your Governour*, and ſee if he do not ſcorn your preſent, as undervalued by it? *Ver.* 8. *And ſhall I accept this at your hands* which a petty Lord will reject with indignation? *Ver.* 13. *For I am a great King, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, Ver.* 14.

Now ſuch high thoughts and conceptions of God with which all our Worſhip muſt be performed to him, can ſpring only from the manifeſtations of God in Chriſt, who is the higheſt Revelation of the Glory of God, *Iſa.* 40. 5. The brightneſs, the effulgency of his glory, *Heb.* 1. 3. When God had yielded to give *Moſes* a ſight of his glory, he put him into the Clift of the Rock (which was a * reſemblance of Chriſt, as a Learned Divine hath obſerved) and ſo made his glory to paſs before him, *Exod.* 33. 22. Certainly, *Moſes* had here a ſight of Gods glory beyond all that ever he had ſeen before. Compare with this that Text, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. *God, who commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*: All the other manifeſtations of Gods glory were but dark and dim, in compariſon of thoſe which appear in the face of Jeſus Chriſt. Therefore we can attain no where ſuch high, ſo great, ſo glorious Conceptions of God as in Jeſus Chriſt.

* Dr. *Raynolds* Pſ. 110. p. 166.

2. *Abraham* had ſuch Conceptions of God as humbled, emptied, and abaſed him in himſelf in compariſon of God; and with ſuch aprehenſions of God muſt we perform all our Worſhip to him, *Pſal.* 95. 6 We are exhorted to come and worſhip, and bow down, and kneel —— In all worſhip we are to teſtifie, as our abſolute ſubjection to God, ſo our humbleſt ſubmiſſion to him; Obſerve what ſelf-abaſing thoughts the apprehenſions of Gods goodneſs wrought in *David* when he went to worſhip before the Lord, 2 *Sam* 7. 18, 19, 20.

Now ſuch Conceptions of God, which above all others humble, and leſſen, and abaſe the Creature before God, they ſpring principally from the manifeſtation of God in Chriſt.

See *Bulkeld de Ang.* c. 34. & 35. Aquin. part. 1. queſt. 62. Art. 1.

It is the general opinion of the Schoolmen, that the Angels in the firſt inſtant of their Creation did not enjoy that ſight of God we call

Beatifical viſion, and that the Angels that fell never had ſight of it at all, for if they had, they could not have fallen. But what they talk of the good Angels meriting that Beatifical Viſion of God in the ſecond or third inſtant of their Creation, is Popiſh foppery; Divines unanimouſly attribute their ſtation and ſtability in holineſs to Jeſus Chriſt: We may upon good grounds alſo attribute to Jeſus Chriſt their firſt admiſſion into the preſence, ſight, enjoyment of God, their ſtate of ſupernatural bleſſedneſs. Pardon this digreſſion; it is to make the way clear of the demonſtration in hand, *viz.* That the Angels *before they* had a ſight of God, or of themſelves in Chriſt, many *of them waxed* proud and fell; the ſame pride that ruined ſome might have ruined all; but after they had a ſight of God in Chriſt, how humble were they? that Viſion ſpoken of, *Iſa.* 6. 1, 2. was manifeſtly an appearance of the glory of God in Jeſus Chriſt, *I ſaw the Lord upon his Throne, high and lifted up, and his Train filled the Temple*; what the carriage of the Seraphims was towards God in this his appearance is expreſt, *Each one had ſix wings, with twain they did fly*; noting their ready execution of Gods Commands: *with twain they did cover their faces*; noting their natural impotency in themſelves to behold the ſurpaſſing brightneſs of Divine Glory; *with twain they covered their feet* as humbled in the ſenſe and ſhame of their own Creature imperfection in compariſon of the infinite purity and holineſs of God.

Thus, when *Moſes* had had a ſight of the glory of God in Chriſt, *He made haſte, he bowed his head toward the earth and worſhipped.* Exod. 34. 8. Quickly is the ſoul humbled at the manifeſtations of God in Chriſt. In Chriſt we have ſeen God humbling, emptying, leſſening, diſhonouring himſelf for us, *Phil.* 2. 5, 6, 7. Who can be proud that hath had a true ſight of God humbled for him?

By the manifeſtations of God in Chriſt are begotten the deepeſt ſoul humiliations for ſin; *Zach.* 12. 10. *They ſhall look on Me whom they have pierced, and they ſhall mourn for him — and they ſhall be in bitterneſs for him* — This great ſorrow was not for the piercing of the Humanity of Chriſt barely conſidered; but for piercing God in Chriſt, though the Godhead was not in the leaſt paſſive; therefore that blood which was ſhed is called, *The blood of God*, *Acts* 20. 28. and that perſon who was pierced called, *The Lord of Glory*, 1 *Cor.* 2. 8. Sins againſt the manifeſtations of the Love, Mercy, Grace, Compaſſions, Goodneſs, and Glory of God in Chriſt beget the deepeſt humiliation of ſoul in all our Confeſſions.

3. *Abraham* had ſuch Conceptions of God as did repreſent him gracious

gracious, propitious, benevolous to the Creature, a bountifull rewarder of him that serveth him, notwithstanding the greatness of God, or the unworthiness of the Creature.

Such apprehensions we must have of God in all our approaches to him, in all our performances of duty and worship.

When *Cain* could not apprehend so much favour and grace of God as could pardon his sin and remove his punishment, he then went out from the presence of the Lord, *Gen.*4.13.16. That is (as Interpreters of good note render it) he left the Church of God in his Fathers Family, the Worship of God, the Ordinances of God, the service of God, the profession of God and all: Such as cannot have apprehensions of God as gracious, propitious, will not come into the presence of God.

Nor such as cannot apprehend him a bountiful rewarder of them that come to him? They bid God depart from them who question whether God can do any thing for them, or whether there be any profit in his service, *Job* 21.14,15. and *Job.* 22.17. when those mercenary hypocrites had lost their worldly profits and preferments which they had gained by the profession of Religion, when the tide was turned, and prophanness only countenanced, they cast of all, and said, *It is in vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his Ordinances*, Mal. 3. 14, 15.

But he that cometh to God must have such apprehensions of him as render him Gracious as well as Glorious, Merciful as well as Righteous; for we come to God sitting on his Throne of Grace, *Heb.* 4. *ult.* and we have to deal with mercy for supply to all our needs.

And he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him, Heb. 11. 6. Why did *David* prefer the lowest place or office in the House or Church of God (a Porters place) before the highest preferments in the Tents of ungodliness, *Psal.* 84. 10. He gives the reason, Ver. 11 *For the Lord is a Sun and shield*; A Sun to confer all good, a shield to preserve from all evill; He will give Grace and Glory, what can a man desire more? yet if there be any good thing beside Grace and Glory, he will not withhold it; such a bountifull Master is God in his House, and such a one his Servants apprehend him.

Now, we cannot have right apprehensions and due conceptions of the Grace, Mercy, Good will of God to us, but from the manifestations of God in Jesus Christ; it is God in Christ reconciling the World to himself, and beseeching us to be reconciled to him, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19,20. When God gave *Moses* a sight of his glory in the Clift of the Rock, *I*

will, ſaith God, *make all my goodneſs paſs before thee*, and he proclaimed the name of the Lord, *Exod.* 34. 6, 7. *The Lord, the Lord God, Merciful, Gracious, Long ſuffering, and abundant in Goodneſs and Truth, forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin*; He preſents himſelf in his richeſt robes of State, and all his Attributes arrayed in a Livery of Grace.

Nor can we have right apprehenſions of God as a bountiful rewarder of his Servants, but through the manifeſtations of himſelf to us in Chriſt; for we cannot expect the reward of Debt, but of Grace; God in Chriſt, and upon the account of Chriſt is the moſt bountiful Rewarder; So Chriſt tells his Diſciples, *Joh.* 12. 26, *If any man ſerve me, let him follow me, and where I am there ſhall my ſervant be alſo: If any man ſerve me, him ſhall my Father honour*; We ſerve the Father in ſerving the Son; never was ſervice rewarded with ſuch honour; *For* (ſaith Chriſt) *The Father himſelf loveth you, becauſe ye have loved me, and believed that I am ſent of God*, Joh. 16 27.

4, *Abraham* had ſuch apprehenſions of God as did beget a comfortable perſwaſion of faith for his acceptation with God in that his drawing near to him.

It is the mind of God that ſuch as come to him ſhould have ſuch apprehenſions of him as one that will accept them, embrace them, when he diſcovers nothing but wrath and diſpleaſure againſt them that ſtand in oppoſition againſt him, *Iſa.* 27. 4, 5. *Fury is not in me: Let a man take hold of my ſtrength that he may make peace with me, and he ſhall make peace with me*: That holy man knew that all his happineſs conſiſted in the enjoyment of God, therefore he ſaid, *It is good for me to draw near to God*; but was he ſure God would accept him? *I have put my truſt* (ſaith he) *in the Lord God*, *Pſal.* 73. 27, 28.

Now ſuch apprehenſions of God as beget a faith of acceptation with God in our approaches to him, can ſpring only from the manifeſtations of God to us in Chriſt; that is ſuppoſed (by judicious Interpreters) to be ſpoken of Jeſus Chriſt, *Jer.* 30. 21. who is ſaid to engage his heart to approach unto the Lord, and God ſaith, *I will cauſe him to draw near, and he ſhall approach unto me*; Chriſt hath boldneſs and liberty, full ſecurity of acceptation with God; and hereby he hath procured us liberty, boldneſs, and acceptation with God; Heb. 4. 14. 16. *Seeing we have a great high Prieſt paſſed into the Heavens — Let us come boldly to the Throne of Grace*, Heb 10. 19, 21, 22. *Having boldneſs to enter into the Holieſt — And having an high Prieſt over the Houſe of God; Let us draw nigh to God with truth of heart, and full aſſurance of faith*, ver. 2. For the

he acceptation of our persons and services. Eph. 3. 12. *In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.*

From what hath been lain down we may conclude, That such apprehensions or Conceptions of God wherewith we are to draw near to God, to perform every duty, and every part of Divine Worship must flow from the manifestations of God in Jesus Christ.

Use. The Use I shall make of this Point is to inform Christians how much it concerneth us to acquaint our selves more intimately with God as he hath manifested himself in Jesus Christ: In whom alone we can have right apprehensions and due Conceptions of God; without which we cannot perform aright any kind of Worship to God.

1. Without due apprehensions and conceptions of God we cannot perform any part of that Natural Worship we owe to God, we cannot love him, fear him, trust in him, pray unto him, praise him, *&c.*

2. Without the right apprehensions and due conceptions of God in Jesus Christ we cannot perform aright any part of his Instituted Worship.

1. For all the Ordinances of Gods Instituted Worship (as the Sacrifices and Sacraments under the Law, so the Sacraments and other Ordinances under the Gospel) seem to have immediate relation to, and near dependance on Christ, *God manifested in the flesh.* You may observe, they consist of two parts, the one Natural, the other Spiritual; the one External, the other Internal: The one as it were, the Body, the other, the Soul of it: The one representing the Humanity, the other the Divinity of Jesus Christ: So that every Ordinance of Worship is (as it were) a repesentation of Christ Incarnate.

2. The Divine Essence or Godhead in Jesus Christ seems to be the proper object of all Worship.

The School-men have concluded (to which I find our learned and pious Divines have given their assent) *That the Essence of the Godhead is the primary and proper object of Worship.* Dr. *Owens* Commun. with the holy Ghost, *chap.* 8.

This Divine Essence is wholly in Christ, Col. 2. 9. *In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily:* In that body or Humane Nature of Christ the fulness of the Godhead dwelt not locally, (as *Locatum in loco*, or *contentum in continente*) but by personal Union. And the Divine Essence as it is in Christ, seems to be the proper Object of all Gospel-Worship: It was so under the Law in Types and Figures; and such was the Tabernacle and Temple Worship in its spiritual Notion.

The Tabernacle or Temple was Gods Habitation, or dwelling place, *Psal.* 76. 2. There was the only place of publick Worship, *Psal.* 29. 2.

No

No Sacrifice was to be offered in any other place; There the Spiritual Worſhippers had by faith a ſight of God, and communion with God, *Pſal.* 63. 2. *Pſal.* 68 24. Towards God in this place they were to make all their Supplications and Prayers where ever, or in what Country ſoever they were, 1 *Kin.* 8. 29 30. See *Dan.* 6. 10. Now the Tabernacle and Temple were a Type of the Body or Humanity of Chriſt, as himſelf explaineth, *Joh.* 2. 19. in which the Divine glory of the Godhead dwelt; *Joh.* 1. 14. *The Word was made fleſh, and dwelt amongſt us* (or Tabernacled in us, as the Greek word ſignifies) *and we ſaw his Glory, the Glory as of the only begotten of the Father.* Therefore what the Tabernacle or Temple was to them under the Law, that is Chriſt Jeſus to us under the Goſpel. And as God manifeſted to them in the Temple was the proper Object of Worſhip to them, ſo God manifeſted to us in Chriſt is the proper Object of Worſhip to us.

3. The Fleſh or Humanity of Chriſt is the *Medium* or Mean by which we have acceſs to God in all our Worſhip This is expreſſed, *Heb.* 10. 19, 20: *Having boldneſs to enter into the Holieſt* (where the Divine glory appeared between the Cherubims on the Mercy ſeat) *by the blood of Jeſus; By a new and living way, which he hath conſecrated for us through the Vayl, which is to ſay, his Fleſh.* By the fleſh of Chriſt here I do not underſtand his Natural Fleſh barely conſidered as ſuch, but in that notion as it is to be underſtood, *Joh.* 3. 53, 54, 55, 56. where Chriſt ſpeaking of eating his Fleſh and drinking his Blood unto life; where Chriſts Fleſh (by a Metonymy of the Cauſe for the Effect) ſignifies the Righteouſneſs, Satisfaction, Reconciliation, Grace, Peace, Glory, Chriſt procured for us by the obedience he performed to God in that Fleſh; By the Fleſh of Chriſt in this ſence we have acceſs to God in all our Worſhip.

Yet is not the conſideration of Chriſts Natural Fleſh altogether uſeleſs unto this end; For whereas we are apt to frame Images and Similitudes of God in our minds, the right apprehenſions of God dwelling in the Humane Nature of Chriſt (who is the true Image of the inviſible God) may be effectual to remove all other Images and likeneſſes of God out of our minds: But then we muſt be careful that we do not terminate our conceptions of God in the Man Chriſt, or in the Manhood of Chriſt, for then we ſhall make the Humane Nature of Chriſt the Image of the Godhead, and that would be an Idol. But when we have taken up an apprehenſion of the Humanity of Chriſt, if our conceptions paſs through the vayl into the Holieſt, if we are led thereby to worſhip that Godhead that dwels in it, this is a right Conception and true Worſhip.

Mr. *Byfield* Comment on 1 Per. 2. 12. P. 410.

The

The Humanity of Christ was to the Godhead as a back of metal to a Christal Glass; Look on such a glass in its pure substance and it is transparent, put a back of metal to it and it gives a beautiful reflex: So if we take up Conceptions of the Godhead in its pure Essence, it is transparent: If we consider God infinite, Almighty, immense, Eternal, what is this to the Creature, or our comfort? If we consider him in his Power, Justice, Wisdom, Holiness, Goodness, Truth, what is this to us: Yea, all these are against us as we are sinners; But if we take up Conceptions of God in all these Attributes as they appear to us in Christ, as they are backt with the Humanity of Christ, so they make a most comfortable reflex upon us; In this glass we behold the glory of the Lord, and are changed into the same similitude from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. In this Glass we behold that Wisdom by which we are instructed, that righteousness by which we are *justified*, that power by which we are preserved, that grace by which we are chosen and called, that goodness by which we are relieved and supplyed, that holiness by which we are transformed, that glory to which we shall be conformed.

The Conclusion of all this is, *That our right apprehensions and due Conceptions of God must spring from the manifestations of God in Jesus Christ.*

How

How are we *To live by Faith* on Divine *Providence*?

Psal. 62. 8.

Trust in Him, at all times, ye People.

THese *Words* are a serious and *Pathetick exhortation* to a most Important and *Spiritual duty*. In *them* we *observe*.

I. The *Duty* propoſed and *enjoyned*, i. e. [a]*Truſt*. Trust in Him. *Confide in*, or ſecurely *repoſe* your ſelves upon him, for Aſſiſtance, *ſupport*, direction, protection, *proviſion*, Deliverance, *Compleat* Salvation.

[a] בטח *Confiſus eſt. Fiduciam poſuit.*

II. *The ſubjects of this Truſt*, Or the *perſons on* whom this Duty is *incumbent*, and from whom it *is expected*. i. e. *ye people*. *Wherein we note*,

1. The *Echphoneſis*, that lies *couched* in the words, which is apt to *excite* Intention, and *Affection*, q. d. *O ye People*. So the *Arabick* Tranſlatour renders the word, *O Populi*.

2. The *univerſality of its Concernment*, To *all* People: [b]'Tis an *indefinite* expreſſion, and holds *parallel with* an *Univerſal*: ye b *People*, q. d. O *All* ye People, *of what* Sex, age, degree, *condition*, relation *ſoever*. Thus the *Septuagint* render the word, πᾶσα σύναγωγὴ λαοῦ, and the *Vulgar* follows them: ſc. *Omnis Congregatio populi*.

[b] עם *Singulare collective pro plurali, per ſynthecſin Hebreis uſitatiſſimam. Muller.*

3. The *ſpeciallity of its obligation*, on *ſome* People, *more* than others. 'Tis *True*, *All* the *families* of the Earth muſt *Truſt* in God; But there is a μαλιστὰ δὲ, A more *Special Tye* that lies on the *Houſhold* of Faith, the *Commonwealth* of *Iſrael*, the *Aſſemblies* of the Saints; thoſe that are the *dearly beloved of Gods Soul*. *Theſe* are ſtrongly obliged, *beyond*, and *above* all others, To *Truſt* in the Lord *Their* God. *Thus* the *Chaldee*

Chaldee Paraph. Populo, Domus Iſrael, and the *Pſalmiſt* elſewhere, *Pſal.* 115. 9. 11. O *Iſrael, truſt* in the Lord, *Ye that fear the Lord*, whether Jew or Gentile, *truſt* in the Lord.

3. *The grand object of this holy truſt*, or the *perſon* in whom this *truſt* muſt be *repoſed*: viz. *in him*. i. e. the *Lord* Jehovah: as appears from *verſ.* 7. In *c him*, and in him *alone*, 'Tis an *excluſive* Particle. In *him*, and in nothing beſides *him*.

c Ei. i. e. Ei ſoli Jun. Tremel.

4. *The Modification of this truſt*, or the *Circumſtance* of the time *when*, and the Duration *How long*, this *Truſt* is to be *exerted*.

1. *Quando: When* muſt we Truſt? At *what time?*

Sol. At *all times, Omni Horâ* Every Hour: So the *Syr. verſion*. As a *true* friend is *to love*, ſo a *ſound* Believer is to *Truſt* at *d* all times.

d Prov. 17. 17

2. *Quamdiu*: The *Duration* of this Truſt, *How long?*

Sol. *All the day long*, Pſ. 44. 8. All *our lives long*: *All the days* of their appointed time muſt Gods *Job's* not only *wait*, but *truſt* till their *change* come. Yea, *for ever*, Iſa. 26. 4. nay, *for ever and ever*, Pſal. 52. 8.

Having thus *unlockt* the *Cabinet*; The *Jewel*, or *Truth*, that we find *laid* up in it is *this*, viz.

It is the great indiſpenſible Duty of all Believers, at all times to truſt in the Lord, and in him alone. *Obſervation.*

All that I have to *ſay* on this *practical* Truth, I ſhall *Couch* under theſe *ſix Generals*.

1. 'On' That *truſting* in God, is a Believers *Duty*.

2. *What* it is to *truſt* in God?

3. *What* is, and ought to be, *the grand and ſole object of* a believers truſt?

4. What are thoſe *ſure and ſtable Grounds*, Thoſe Corner-ſtones on which the *Faithful* may firmly *Build* their *truſt* in God?

5. *What* are thoſe *ſpecial* and *ſignal ſeaſons*, which call aloud for the *exerting* of this *truſt*?

6. How *Faith* or *Truſt* puts forth, *exerts*, *demeans*, *beſtirs* it ſelf in *ſuch ſeaſons*?

1. 'On', That *Truſting in God is a Believers Duty*. The *Lord is*, or at *leaſt* he *ſhould* be the *e Confidence* of all the ends of the Earth, *Pſal.* 65. 5. *Truſt in the Lord with all thy Heart*, Prov. 3. 5. On the *Arm* of his *Power*, Iſa. 51. 5. 5. On the *f Word* of his *Truth*, in his faithful *promiſes*, in his freeſt *mercies*, Pſal. 52. 8. In his full *Salvation*, Pſal. 78. 22.

e *Meton. Adjuncti. Actus pro Objecto.*

f *In verbis ejus.* So *Chald. Paraph.* renders our Text.

2. *What it is to truſt in God.*

Sol. 1. *Negatively*, To *presume* on God, to *tempt* God, to *conceive false hopes* of Gods gracious *favour* and protection, *whilst in a way of sin*, is *not* to trust in God. To *gallop* down a *precipice*, and to say *confidently* I shall *not fall*; to *cast our selves down headlong* from a Pinacle of the Temple, and *yet to expect the protection of Angels*: Mat. 4.6.7.

g Mic. 3.11. To Teach for *Hire*, and to Divine for *Money*, and yet *to g lean* upon the Lord, *saying*, Is not the *Lord* among us? *None evil can come upon us*: To *bless* a mans self *in his heart*, and to *say* he shall have *peace*, *though* he walk in the *imaginations* of his *evil* heart; *Deut.* 29. 19. All this is *not*

i Job 15.31. to *Trust* in *God*, but to trust in *i Vanity*, and to *spin the Spiders web*. Job 8.13, 14.

2. *Positively*, And so more *generally*, and more *particularly*.

k Psal. 55.22. 1. *More Generally*, to *trust* in God, is to *cast* k our burthen *on the Lord* when 'tis too *heavy* for our own *shoulder*: To *dwell* in the *se-*

l Psal. 91.1. *cret l places* of the *Most High*, when we know not where *to lay* our Heads *on earth*. To *look to our Maker*, and to have respect to the Holy

m Isa. 36.6. One of *Israel*, Isa. 17.7. To *m lean* on our Beloved, *Cant.* 8.5. To *stay* our selves when *sinking*, on the *Lord our God*, Isa. 26.3. In a word: *Trust* in God, is *that High Act or Exercise of Faith, whereby the Soul looking upon God and casting of it's self on His goodness, power, promises, faithfulness, and providence is lifted up above carnal fears, and discouragements, above perplexing doubts and disquietments, either for the obtaining and continuance of that which is good, or for the preventing or removing of that which is evil.*

2. *More particularly*: For the *clearer* discovery of the *Nature* of *Divine trust*, we shall *lay* before you, It's *Ingredients*, *Concomitants*, *Effects*.

I. *The ingredients of trust in God.* They are *three*,

n Psal. 9.10. 1. *A clear knowledge*, or *Right apprehension of God, as revealed in His Word, and Works.* They and *they only* that *o know* thy Name, will *trust* in thee. The *grand* Reason, *why* God is so little trusted, is *because* He is so little known. *Knowledg of God* is of such necessity to a Right *trust*, that it is put as a *Synonyma* for trust. I will set him on

p Psal. 91.14. high, *because* he hath *p known* (i.e. Trusted in) *my name*

2. *A full Assent of the understanding, and Consent of the will, to Those Divine Revelations, as true and good, wherein the Lord propoſeth himself as an Adequate Object for our trust.* This Act the *Greeks* expres by the *word* Πιστευειν. The *Latines* by *Credere*, *Fidem habere*. *Testimonium recipere*: The *Hebrews* by הֶאֱמִין. All importing *believing* or giving

q Exod. 14.31. *credit to*. Thus the *Israelites* are said to q *believe the Lord* and his Servant

Servant *Moſes*: And thus the *Soul* that *truſts*, looks upon the words of *Promiſe*, ὡς πιστὸν τὸν ἐπαγγειλάμενον [and ἄξιον] as *faithful* and *worthy* of all *acceptation*. r 1 Tim. 1. 15

3. *A firm and fixed reliance, Reſting, or Recumbency of the whole Soul on God*; or a *firm perſwaſion*, and ſpecial *Confidence* of the *Heart*, whereby a believer *particularly applies* to himſelf the *faithful* promiſes of God, and certainly *Concludes* and *determines* with himſelf, that the Lord is *able* and *willing* to *make good* to him the good *promiſes he* hath *made*. *This* indeed is the very *formality* of *truſt*; one of the Higheſt and *Nobleſt* Acts of *Faith*. *This* is *that* which the *Greeks* term Πεποίθησις, and which *Paul* ſo frequently uſeth in ſeveral of his *Epiſtles*. Thus *Abraham* is ſaid, to be *ſtrong in Faith*, giving glory to God; and was *fully* ſ *perſwaded*, that what he had *promiſed*, he was *able* and *willing* to *perform*. This the *Latines* call *Fiducia*; The Schools *Fiducia fidei*, the *Hebrews* by a word that ſignifies *to lean on*, or caſt the *weight* of ones body on, for *ſupport* and ſtay. Thus, *Iſa.* 10. 20. The houſe of *Jacob* ſhall no more *ſtay* upon him that ſmote them, but *ſhall* t *ſtay* upon the *Lord* the *Holy One* of *Iſrael* in *truth*. *Thus* for the *ingredients* of truſt. ſ Rom. 4 21. t נשען r firmiter innitetur, incumbet.

2. *The Concomitants of an Holy truſt*, and theſe are,

1. *An Holy quietneſs, ſecurity, and peaceableneſs of Spirit ſpringing from a full perſwaſion of our ſafety*. By *this* the Soul is freed from *diſtracting* cares and *jealouſies*, about our ſtate & condition. Hence *that* of the Prophet *Iſa.* 26. 3. Thou wilt keep him *in perfect* u *peace*, whoſe mind is *ſtaied* on thee, becauſe he *truſteth* in thee. An *holy* ſecurity *I ſay*, not a *carnal* ſecurity, like *theirs* mentioned, *Zeph.* 1. 12. that were *ſetled on their lees*, that ſaid in their *hearts*, the Lord *will not do good*, neither *will he do evil*: nor like *that* of the *ſcarlet* whore, *Rev.* 18. 6. that *ſays* in heart, *I ſit as a Queen, & ſhall ſee no ſorrow*. *No* but an *holy* ſecurity *as* we have it, *Prov.* 18. 10. The *Name* of the Lord is a *ſtrong tower*, the righteous *runneth* to it, *i. e.* by the *feet* of *truſt*, and is * *ſafe*: As *ſafe* as a man *judgeth* himſelf to be, when got into an *high tower well fortified*, and *feare* not the *ſharpeſt* or *ſwifteſt* darts, that can be *ſhot* againſt him. *Safe* as the *chickens* take themſelves to be, when *houſed* under the x *Covert* of their *Dam's* wing, *Pſal.* 46. 1. Or *ſafe* as the *manſlayer* is from the purſuit of the *Avenger*, when *Lodg'd* in a City of *Refuge*. *Thus* when a man *truſts* in God, he doth ſweetly *acquieſce* and repoſe himſelf in Gods *boſome*, troubles himſelf *no more*, caſts no *jealous* thoughts about his *Condition*. Thus *David* reſolves, I will lay me down *in peace*, and *ſleep*, for thou, *Lord*, makeſt me to dwell *in* y *ſafety* or *in truſt*, Pſal. 4. 8. u שלום pacem עלום pacem. * ותשגב Et exaltabatur. Celſus ab alto, infra ſe cernens Hominum genus. Sil. Ital. x ut pulli ſub alis galli. ne. y לבטח Confidenter.

2. *A Stedfast, well-grounded Hope,* Trust and Hope are *Gemini,* Twins, born together, bred up together; hence often conjoyn'd in Scripture. z Psal. 71. 5. *Thou art my Hope* z *O Lord God, thou art my Trust from my youth:* a Jer. 17. 7. *And blessed is the man, that* a *trusteth in the Lord, and whose Hope* Psal. 119. 42, 43, 49. *the Lord is.* Hence the *Septuagint* usually render the word put for Trust, as also in the Text בטחו ἐλπίσατε, and *Ar. Mont.* and divers others, *Sperate.* Hope ye in the Lord; Hope then is that *Fidus Achates,* the Faithful Companion of Trust. Now, in this Hope there are two things,

1. *An holy and confident expectation, and looking after Gods gracious presence.* Trust believes, and Hope expects to enjoy what God has promised. Thus the Prophet, *Isa.* 8. 17. *I will wait upon the Lord, and I will* b *look for him.* Hope looks, and looks out, as expecting Gods appearing; Not as *Sisera's* mother once did, who looked for a victorious success, and expected that her son should have returned a triumphant Conqueror, richly laden with spoils and booty; when as the wretch lay c bleeding at the foot of *Jael:* Nor like those sinful miserable people, who d looked for peace, but behold, no good came. No, such a vain groundless Hope, draws a blush into the cheek, and covers the face with confusion. But this is an Hope which makes not e ashamed: whose earnest expectation shall assuredly end in sweet fruition.

b וקויתי *Et expectabo eum.*

c Judg. 5. 28.

d Jer. 7. 15.

e Rom. 5. 5.

2. *An humble and constant waiting on Gods Leisure.* Looking out, and waiting on God, both put together. f *Therefore I will look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my Salvation; my God will hear me.* Faith gets up to the top of it's watch tower, looks out, sees whether relief be coming. But suppose none appears in *Kenne;* Suppose *help defer'd.* Yet now it waits, and tarries Gods time. Faith knocks at Heavens Gate, no answer from within; Faith knocks again, still there is silence; However Faith concludes, my God will hear, yea, and answer too; but 'tis fit I should wait his time. g *The vision is for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie: Though it tarry, I must and will wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry.* Thus *David,* h *My Soul wait thou only upon God;* or keep thou silence unto God, *for my expectation is from him. David,* when he shuts his mouth, opens his ear; waits and listens what God will say, and concludes, *Contra Gentes,* the Lord will in his own best time speak peace, *Psal* 85. 8.

f Mic. 7. 7.

g Hab. 2. 3.

h Psal. 62. 5.

3. *An humble, holy, and undaunted Confidence.* Thus *Solomon,* in the fear of the Lord, in the filial, awful, reverential fear of God, here is strong c Confidence, and his children shall have a place of refuge, *Prov.* 14. 26. This holy confidence is nothing else, but Faith peg'd up to it's *Ela.* A confident Soul moves in an higher Orb than other Saints, leads

c מבטח עז *fiducia fortitudinis.*

up

up the *Van* of the *Militia* of Heaven. As *Patience* is nothing else but *Hope Lengthened*: so *Confidence* is *nothing less* than *Faith strengthened*, the very *Spirits*, the meer *Elixar* of Faith, which carries with it.

1. *Christian Courage and* * *Fortitude*, opposite to *Carnal fear* and despondency of Spirit. *d Behold*, God is my Salvation, *I will trust and not be afraid*, for the Lord *Jehovah* is my *strength*. *e* He shall *not* be *afraid* of evil tidings, his *Heart* is fixed, *trusting* in the Lord. Thus *David* undauntedly, the *Lord* is my *Light* and my Salvation, *whom shall I fear?* The Lord is the *strength* of my life, of whom shall I be *afraid?* Psal. 27. 1. His *Confidence* in God quite *extinguisht* in him all base, *sneaking fear* of man, *Psal.* 56. 4.

2. *Christian boldness and Adventurousness*, opposite to Cowardice. Holy Confidence *steels* the heart of *f Joseph of Aramathea* to go in *Boldly* to *Pilate*, and to *beg* the Body of Jesus. *This* was *that* enabled *David* to encounter *Goliah*, that made him *dare* to take a *Bear* by the teeth, yea, and a *Lion* by the *Beard*. 'Tis for *sluggards* to say, *there's a Lion* in the way, *Prov* 22. 13. but let a *Believer* that makes God his *Trust*, but once *Know* his *Duty*, it is *enough*, he will with a * Courageous and *undaunted* mind, chearfully *undertake* it, and commit both *himself* and the *success* to God, *Acts* 4. 13, 19. — 20. 22. — 22. 13, *Jer.* 7. 7, 8, 9. *Dan.* 3. 17, 18., *Esther* 4. 16. *Heb.* 10. 34. to 40.

3. *Holy and humble Boasting*, opposite to sinful *Concealing* of what *God* hath done *for us*. A Believer that *dares not* Boast of *himself*, or *riches*, of any thing *within*, that has *no Confidence* in the flesh; yet dares *g* boast *of his God*. In God *we boast all the day long*, and praise *thy Name* for ever. Thus the *Church*, challenges the *eyes* and *ears*, of *All* that were round about her, saying, *Lo*, this, *this* is *our God*, we have *waited* for him, and *he* hath *saved us*, Isa. 25. 9.

III. *The Effects of an holy Trust*, and they are such *as these*,

1. *Fervent, effectual, constant Prayer*, Thus in our *text*, *Trust*, in him at all times, ye people, *pour out your hearts before him*, ps. 62 8. while *Joshuah* is in the *Valley* conflicting with *Amaleck*, *Moses* gets him up into the Mount *to h Pray*. *Moses* knew *full well*, that as *Prayer* without *Faith*, is but a *beating* of the Air, so *Trust* without *Prayer*, was but a presumptuous *Bravado*. He that *promises* to *give*, and bids us *trust* his *promises*, *Commands*, us to *pray*, and expects obedience to his *Commands*. He will *give*, but not *without* our *asking*, Ezek. 36. 37. Ps. 50. 15.

2. *Sincere, universal, spiritual, cheerful, constant, Obedience*, They that *expect* to *enjoy* what God *promises*, will be *sure* to *perform* what God *injoyns*. Holy *trust* takes it for a *maxim*, that he that *contemns* the *Commands*.

* *Beatus ille, qui undiqȝ petitus, firmus stetit: qui exhausis Dæmonis pharetram nec concedit, imo ne de gradu quidem tantis permotus est.* Nic.

d Isa. 12. 2.
e Psal. 112. 7. 91. 5. 46. 1, 2, 3.
f Mark 15. 43. τολμήσας.

* *Invictus ad labores, fortis ad pericula, rigidus adversus voluptates, durus adversus illecebras.* Ambros.

g Psal. 44. 8.

h Exod. 17. 9, 11. Psal. 86. 1, 2. 1 John 5. 14. Psal. 18. 2, 3.

mands of a God, as his *Soveraign* has *no* share in the *promises* of a God as *All-sufficient*. If we *trust* in the Son with *a Faith of Confidence*, we
i Psal. 2. 12. shall be *sure* to *honour* the Son with a i *Kiss of obedience*. Thus *David*, Psal. 119. 166. I have *hoped* for thy Salvation, and *done thy Command*. As *Faith* shews it self by its *works*, Jam. 2. 18. So *trust* discovers it self by its *obedience*. *Especially* in the use *of such means* as God *prescribes* for the bringing about his *appointed End*. If *Naman* will prove, that he *trusts* the God of *Israel*, he must go and *wash* in *Jordan*. True indeed the waters of *Bethesda* could not *cure*, unless the *Angel stirred* those waters: and yet the *Angel* would not *cure*, *without* those *waters*.
Act. 27. 24, 31. *Paul* trusted that himself, and the *men* with him should all get *safe* to Land, but *then* 'twas with this *Proviso*, that they all *kept* in the ship. Gods *means* are to be *used* as *well* as Gods *Blessing* to be *expected*.

3. *Soul ravishing*, *Heart-inlivening Joy*. Thus *David*; I have *trusted* in thy mercy, my *Heart* shall *rejoyce* in thy Salvation, Psal. 13. 5. If the Lord be our *trust* and strength, he will be, he *cannot* but be our *joy*
k Isa. 12. 2. and k *song*. In whom *believing* let me add, *in whom trusting*, ye *rejoyce* with joy *unspeakable* and full of *Glory*, 1 Pet. 1. 8. Thus *trust* and *joy* are linkt and *lodg'd* together in that *Psal.* 64. 10. The Righteous *shall be glad* in the Lord, *and shall trust* in him, and all the *upright* in heart shall *Glory*. See to what a *Cue* of Joy *Habakkuk's* trust had raised him, *Hab.* 3. 17, 18, 19. The Soul that truly *trusts* cannot but *sit* down under Gods shadow *with great* l *delight*: His *fruit* must needs be *exceeding sweet* to our taste. Is m *Jonah* exceeding *glad* with the *shadow* of his *Gourd*? how then must a *Saint* needs *rejoyce* in the *protection* of a *God*? *And thus* I have dispatcht the *second General* proposed, *viz.* a full *discovery* of the *Nature of trust* in God; *what* it is, what it's *ingredients*, *concomitants*, *effects*. I *proceed*, to the *third*, viz.

l Can. 2. 3.
m Jon. 4. 6.

III. *What is*, *or at least ought to be the Grand*, *and Sole Object of a Believers trust*?

Sol. The *Text* and *Doctrine* tells us. It is *the Lord Jehovah*, and he *alone*, He is, or at *least* should be,

n Psal. 4. 5. 1. *The grand Object of a Believers trust*. Put your trust *in the* n *Lord*.
o 1 Tim. 4. 10. In whom should a *Dying* creature *trust*, but in a o *living* God! In stormy and *tempestuous* times, though we *may not* run to the *Bramble* yet we
p Isa. 26. 4. *must* to *this* p *Rock* for refuge. When the Sun *burns hot* and scorches,
q Psal. 36. 7. a *Jonah's Gourd* will prove *Insignificant*; No q *shadow* like that of a *Gods Wings*.

2. *The grand Object of a Believers trust*. Holy *trust*, an Act of worship *proper* and *peculiar* to an Holy God. *No* creature must *share* in it, *Whatever*

whatever we *trust* in (*unless* it be in *subordination* unto God) we make it our *God*, or at least our *Idol*. True *trust* in God takes us off the *hinges* of all *other* confidences; As we cannot *serve*, so we cannot *trust God* and *Mammon*. There must be but *one string* to the *Bow* of our trust, and *that is the Lord*. More *particularly*, we may not, *must* not repose an holy *trust* in any thing besides *God*, either *within* us, or *without* us.

I. *Not in any thing within us*: And so,

1. *Not in our Heads, Understanding, Wisdom, Policy, No* safe *leaning to our own* r *Understanding*, *Carnal* Wisdom is but an *ignis fatuus*, that misleads into a *Bog*, and there leaves us. Thy *Wisdom*, and thy *Knowledge*, *it* hath *perverted* thee, *Isa.* 40. 17. He that is *wise in his own eyes*, will be found *at last* to *stand* in his *own* light. r Prov. 3. 5.

2. Not *in our own hearts*. It is *g folly*, the height of folly, to trust those *Lumps* of flesh, that are so *h deceitfull* so *desperately* wicked. g Prov. 28. 26. h Jer. 17. 9.

3. Not *in our bodily strength and vigour*. Those *hands*, that are now *able* to break *a bow* of steel, will ere long *hang down* and *i* faint. The most *brawny Arm*, utterly *unable* to *ward off* or *wrestle* with the assaults of *Death* or *Sickness*. Those *Legs*, which now *stand* like Pillars of *Brass*, will shortly appear to be, what *indeed* they are, but sinking *Pillars* of moulding *clay*. Raise the *strength* of man to its highest 'Ακμὴ, yet even then it cannot make so much *as one* k *hair*, either *white* or *black*. i Eccl. 12. 1, 2, 3. k Mat. 5. 36.

4. Not *in any natural or acquired Excellencies*. Be they what they *will*, or should they be far *more* than they *are*: Should *all the Lines* of Created *Perfections* meet in *one* man, as in their *Center*, yet surely *that man*, in that his *best estate* is *altogether* l *vanity*, and *therefore* not to be *trusted* in, l Psal. 39. 5.

II. *Not in any thing without us*. To trust in any Creature without us, is to *feed* not so much on *bread as on Ashes*, or *rather* on *gravel-stones*, which may easily *break* the *Teeth*, but can never *fill* the *Belly*. m Isa. 44. 20.

1. *Not in* n *riches*: No not in the o *abundance* of Riches. Though riches *increase*, our *hearts* must not be *set* upon them. *Riches*, when in their fullest *flow* are most p *uncertain*. Wilt thou therefore *set* thine eyes *on that which is* q *not*? Though they *seem* to have a *being*, yet they are *indeed* but *fair faced nothings*, gilded *vanities*. Or suppose they *are*, yet they *were moments* they may *not be*. Like *Birds* on the *wing*, ready to take their *flight*. *Treasures* then are not to be made our *trust*. They cannot r *profit* in the day of *wrath*. Nay, if we *trust* in our Riches on *Earth*, never expect a *portion* in *Heaven*. *Sooner* shall the *f Camel* go through the Eye of a *Needle*, than such an one *pass* through the *gate* of glory. n Jer. 9. 23. o Psal. 52. 8. p 1 Tim. 6. 17. q Prov. 23. 5. r Prov. 11. 4. f Mat. 10. 24.

2. *Not*

Psal. 115. 8. 2. *Not in* t *Idols, Baal, Dagon, Ashtoreth,* and the whole pack of those senseless abominations, cannot save themselves, much less can they preserve their bewitched Votaries.

3. *Not in man, or humane Allies or Assistances,* Psal. 62. 9, 10. *Ægypt* and all her Chariots when trusted in, prove not supporting staffs, but broken Reeds, which run into the side and bear not up, but wound the body, 2 *King.* 18. 24. *Jer.* 46. 25. If the shadow of *Æ-gypt* be our trust, the end of that trust will be our confusion, *Isa.* 30. 2, 3. Might we build the nest of our trust on the Sons of *men,* Reason would bid us pitch on the topmost branches of the tallest Cedars, I mean those earthly gods, the Princes of this world. But *alas these,* though styled gods, must dye like men, *Psal.* 82. 6. yea, like other men. Their breath is in their nostrils, they soon return to their dust, from whence they sprang, and then all their thoughts, and with them, *our* hopes on them perish, *Psal.* 146. 4.

4. *Not in any thing clad in mortal flesh.* He that presumes to make flesh his Arm, will be sure at a long run, to find the Father of Spirits his Foe. Thus saith the Lord, *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his Arm, Jer.* 17. 5. And thus we have dispatcht the third general.

IV. *What are those sure and stable grounds on which Saints may firmly and securely build their trust on God?*

Sol. There is nothing which the eye of Faith or Reason can discover in God, but the arm of Trust may safely lean on. But more particularly.

1. *Gods Almighty Arm and Power.* The Lord hath an Arm, an outstretched *n* Arm, an Hand, an Omnipotent Hand: An Hand that spans the *o* Heavens, that stretcheth them out as a Curtain, and spreadeth them out as a Tent to dwell in. On this Almighty Arm may Believers *p* trust, the Lord is the strong and mighty God, *Psal.* 24. 8. That created the World with a *q* word and can as easily speak or look it into its first Nothing. He is a wonder-working God, *Exod.* 15. 11. *Elshaddai, Gen.* 17. 1. Able to do *ὑπὲρ ἐκ περισσοῦ,* far more exceeding *r* abundantly than we can ask or think, his vast power far exceeds our wants, prayers, thoughts, all that we can need, beg, imagine, we want much, can ask great things, can think greater. Our Imaginations exceed our Expressions: Yet Gods power far exceeds both / Open we our mouths never so wide, his open hand can more than fill them. Gods power then is a most firm *Basis,* whereon to fix our trust. Trust ye in the Lord Jehovah, for in the Lord Jehovah is *t* Everlasting strength. Creature props are not able to bear the

n 2 King. 8. 42.
o Isa. 40. 12.
p Isa. 51. 5.
q Psal. 33. 9.
r Eph. 3. 10.
s Psal. 81. 10.
t צור עולמים *Petra seculorum,*

the weight and ſtreſs of an immortal ſoul. They are ſandy foundations, apt to ſink and crumble under us. But an Almighty God is a Rock, a Rock of Ages, on which he that builds his confidence, though the Winds blow, the rain deſcends, and the Storms beat upon him, *yet ſhall he not* u *fall*. On this power of God *Abraham* built his tranſcendent † faith, and *David* his impregnable truſt. 2 *Sam.* 22. 2, 3.

u Mat. 7. 25.
† Rom. 4. 24.

2. *Gods infinite and free Goodneſs, Mercy, and Bounty. The Lord is good to all, and his tender* x *mercies are over all his works.* With the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption; His Bowels are as tender as his Arm is ſtrong. He is no leſs willing than able to relieve; Therefore let *Iſrael* hope in the Lord. It is the *Pſalmiſts* y inference. *Like as a Father pitieth his Children, ſo the Lord* z *pitieth them that fear him.* That Father, that ſees his child in want, and pitties not, and pittying, if able, relieves not, forfeits the name of Father, and may write himſelf not Man, but Monſter. It is enough for our heavenly Father, that he a knows we have need of any thing. The Lord is all that to his people, yea, and infinitely more than that which *Iſis Mammoſa* was to the *Ægyptians*. A God full of Dugs, and whilſt he hath a breaſt, let not Saints fear the want of Milk. The Character that the Heathens *Idolatrouſly* gave their *Jupiter*, may far more truly, indeed only, be aſcribed to our *Jehovah*, He alone is that τὸν τὰ μέγιστα τὰ that *Optimus Maximus*. The beſt, as well as the greateſt of Beeings. Goodneſs is Gods darling Attribute; It is that which he looks on as his glory. *I beſeech thee*, ſaith *Moſes*, *ſhew me thy* b *glory*. *Moſes*, thy Prayer is heard, and it ſhall be anſwered. But what ſays God in anſwer to this requeſt? See *Ver.* 19. *I will make all my goodneſs paſs before thee*. The thing requeſted, was a view of Gods glory: The things promiſed was a diſcovery of Gods goodneſs. Which hints unto us, that however all the Attributes of God are in themſelves glorious, yet the Lord glorieth moſt in the manifeſtation of his goodneſs. So then, though we have nothing to plead, or prevail, with God, as in or from our ſelves, yet there is an *Orator* in his own boſome, that will certainly and effectually intercede for our relief, and that is his goodneſs. This was that that boyed up *David*, this was the Cordial that kept him from fainting; c *I had fainted, unleſs I had believed to ſee the goodneſs of the Lord in the land of the living.*

x Pſal. 145. 9.
y Pſal. 130. 7.
z Pſal. 103. 13.
a Mat. 6. 32.
b Exod. 33. 18.
c Pſal 27. 13. d οὐ μὴ οὐκ οὐ μὴ: Never, in no wiſe, in no caſe, what ever I do, I will not do this whatever ſhift I make.

3. *Gods many, choice, exceeding great, and precious Promiſes.* Theſe are the flagons that faith keeps by her, the apples ſhe hath hoarded up in ſtore, to revive and quicken in a day of ſwooning. Who will not truſt the Word, the Promiſe, the Proteſt of the King of Kings. God hath ſaid, I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee, d *Heb.* 13, 5. The Greek here hath five

five Negatives, & may thus be rendred: I will not, not leave thee, neither will I not, not forsak thee. Five times as one observes, is this precious Promise renewed, that we may suck and be satisfied with the breasts of its consolations, that we may milk out and be delighted with the abundance of its glory. Leave us God may to our thinking; but really he doth not, will not. Or if he leaves us for a time, a small moment, yet he *will not* forsake us utterly: Desert he may, but not disinherit; forsake us, it may be, in regard of Vision, not of Union; change his Dispensation, *not his* Disposition. e *Dost thou pass through the waters?* Thy God *hath promised* to be with thee: He was so with *Noah* and the *Israelites* in the red Sea, and in *Jordan*. *Dost thou walk through the fire?* Warm'd thou mayst be, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. The three Children were living Monuments of this truth, God sent his Angel & delivered his servants f that trusted in him. *The Lord hath graciously* engaged to create upon every dwelling place of Mount *Sion*, and upon her assemblies a cloud and g smoak by day, for her protection, and the shining of a flaming fire by night for direction, to be a Shield and Sun, yea, and shadow from the heat, and a place of refuge, and a Covert from storm and from rain. In such promises as these holy *David* h trusted: This was his comfort in his affliction, the word of his God quickned him. Gods Promises are some of his Bonds and Obligations whereby he is held firmly bound to Believers. These faith makes bold to put in suit, to plead the security that God hath given: Lord, saith Faith, here is thy Bill obligatory, behold, see here thy hand and seal: Discern, I pray thee, whose are these, the Signet, and Bracelets, and *Staff*. Thus *David*, *Psal.* 119 49. *Remember thy word unto thy Servant, wherein thou hast caused me to hope*; The word of Promise was all that *David* had to shew, and he counts that enough to set his Faith on work.

e Isa. 44. 2.

f Dan. 3. 28.

g Is. 4. 5, 6.

h Ps. 119 49, 50

† 1 Cor. 10. 13

† Luke 21. 33.

i Josh. 23. 14, 15.

k Psal. 119. 75.

4. *Gods inviolable, stedfast, never failing* * *Faithfulness*, Gods goodness inclines him to make good Promises, and his faithfulness engages him to make those Promises good: If the word be once gone out of his mouth, * *Heaven and earth shall sooner pass away, than one Iota of that word fail.* This faithfulness of God *i Joshua* asserts to the height: throws down the *Gauntlet*, & does as it were challenge all *Israel* to shew but that one thing that God had failed them in, of all the good things that he had promised. If God in very k faithfulness afflicts, to make good his threatnings much more in faithfulness will he preserve, to make good his promises. God never yet did, never will fail that man that puts his trust in him, *Ps.* 9. 10. It is true God may frown on, yea, and severly lash a *Solomon*, a *Jedidiah*, when they break his Statutes, and keep not his Command-

ments:

ments: Nevertheless his loving kindness he will not utterly take from them, nor suffer his *l* faithfulness to fail. God never yet brake his word by deceiving, nor crakt his credit by compounding, for less than was due, with any Mortal living. So faithful is God, so true to his Word, that let God but promise a Victory, and *Jehoshaphat* will sound an *Io* Triumph *m* before the Battel; And let but he threaten *Babylons* ruines, and the Angel cries, *Babylon n* is faln. Thus then Gods faithfulness calls for Saints trust, *Psal.* 146. 5, 6.

l Psal. 89. 33.

m 2 Chron. 20. 17, &c.

n Rev. 14 8.

5. *Gods most holy, wise, powerful, gracious providence.* This also is a prop for trust. It is the *o* Lord, that gives unto all life, and breath, and all things. It is in him we all live and move, and have our being. The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding of, and providing for the evil and the good. This divine providence the *Egyptians* acknowledged, and held forth in that significant *Hieroglyphick* of a Sun pourtrayed in a Ship tossed with wind and water, *Euseb. de prepar. Evang. l.* 3. *c.* 3. God hath an eye in the wheels and motions of all inferiour creatures, *Ezek.* 1. 18, 20. ὁδὸν ἀνεφύτευσεν ἀμπελῶνι παρὰ τὸν Δία· πάντα σωτῆρα ὁ δράκων ἐφύλαττε. Hence that holy Symbol of our English *Josiah*, *Edward* 6 *vi.* A Celestial Globe with this Motto, *Nihil sine Deo.* It is the Lord that feeds the *Sparrows* that have no *Barn*, and the *Ravens* that have no *Granary*. It is he that so gorgeously cloaths the *Lilies*, that have no *Distaff*. Nota *q Bird* descends from his *perch*, not an *hair* falls from the *Head* without his *Father*. *Fear not then, ye are of more value than many Sparrows.* Where God sends mouths he will not grudg meat; And he that feeds the young *Ravens* will not starve the young *r Heirs*. Faith contemplates what God doth, recounts what God hath done, and from thence concludes what God will do. Hence it prayes with the *Psalmist*, *Psal.* 17. 7. and 31. 19. Faith reflects on former experiences, its own and others, and by the holy skill it hath in the Physiognomy of Providence, clearly reads and collects what God will do, in what God hath done. It casts its eye on,

o Act 17. 25, 28.

p Prov. 15 8.

q Matth. 10. 29, 30, 31.

r Mr. Heron when dying to his Wife, somewhat desponding by reason of her many children, and small provision for them.

1. *The experiences of others*, And judges her self to have an interest in those very Providences of grace, which they enjoyed. Thus the Church, a thousand years after that heavenly combate betwixt God & *Jacob*, tels us; That God found *Jacob* in *Bethel*, *and there he spake with* ſ *us*, several ages before they were born: yet with us, *i. e.* with *Jacob* for our good, on our account, for our interest. Faith remembers there was once a *Joseph* in a Prison, a *Jeremy* in a Dungeon, a *Daniel* in a Den, a *Peter* in Chains, an *Hezekiah* on a supposed death-bed, and Providence assisted them, why not me? *This poor man cried, and the Lord helped him,*

ſ Hos. 12. 4. *Arrowsmith.* chain 401. 418 *Jenk* on Jude, part. 1. p. 286.

Pſal. 34. 6. *and Our Father truſted, and thou didſt deliver them*; *Pſal.* 22. 4, 5. Lord thou art the ſame yeſterday, to day, and for ever, why then may not I expect Salvation from thee?

2. *It's own experiences.* Thus *David* confidently replies to *Saul*; t 1 Sam. 17. 37. that thought him no match for *Goliah*. t *The Lord that delivered me out of the paw the of Lion and Bear, will alſo deliver me from this uncircumciſed Philiſtine*; and thus *Paul*, He had the ſentence of death upon him; the black ſtones were thrown down into the Urn againſt him, but his God, had, and did deliver, and therefore in him he truſts, that he u 2 Cor. 1. 10. will ſtill u deliver.

VI. And Laſtly, I argue from *Thoſe dear Relations in which the Lord is pleaſed to ſtand, and own, towards his people.* Theſe *cry aloud* for their * Iſa. 40. 28. *truſt* in God. Is he not our * *Creator*? Hath he *built* the houſe, and will he not *keep* it up? he that *made* us, will *aſſuredly* take *care* of us. *We may ſafely* give up our ſelves, our truſt, our all to him, who hath given * Pet. 4. 19. us our ſelves, and our all. This * relation the Apoſtle makes the ground of truſt. Is he not our Redeemer? will he part with his blood for us, x Iſa. 63. 16. and yet deny us bread? Is he not our x Father? Are we not *his* Children? And ſhall he not provide for his own Children? 1 *Tim.* 5. 8. *Hath* the great God put ſuch a *Phyloſtorgy* or natural affection into the *Bear*, *Pellican*, *Dolphin*, *Lioneſs*, *Eagle* towards their young, and ſhall not he much more carry his own upon *Eagles* wings? *Exod.* 19. 4. Is he not our King, Head, and Husband? in a word, all thoſe relations wherein we ſtand to God, or God to us, are ſtable grounds of our truſt upon him, and ſtrong engagements of his aſſiſtance to, and *Providence* over us. Thus much for the Fourth general, the Fifth followeth.

V. *What are thoſe ſpecial and ſignal Seaſons, which call aloud for the exerting of this Divine truſt.*

Sol. This Holy Duty is indeed never out of ſeaſon, So much the Original y עוֹת *Tempeſtive eloqui.* word y עֵת for time imports. True indeed our Saviour ſaith, and ſaith truly, *My time*, i. e. my time of diſcovering my ſelf to be a Wonder working God, *is not* k *yet come*. Yes, but all time, in reſpect k John 7. 6. of truſt in God, is an appointed, yea, and an accepted time. The Wiſ- l Eccl. 3. 1, &c. man tells us, There is an appointed l time for every purpoſe under Heaven. A time to kill and to heal, to plant and to pluck up, to weep and to laugh, to get and to loſe, to be born and to die. In all theſe truſt in God, is, not like Snow in harveſt uncomely; but ſeaſonable, yea neceſſary. There may be indeed a time, when God will not be found, but no time wherein he muſt not be truſted. *Nullum tempus occurrit Regi*, ſaith the Law. Let me add, *Nec Fiducia*, and 'tis ſound Divinity. The

time-

time of trusting in God cannot be laps'd; But more expresly. There are some special Instances and Nicks of time for Trust.

1. *The time of prosperity*: when we sit under the warm Beams of a Meridian Sun; when we wash our steps in Butter and our feet in Oyl: when the Candle of the Lord shines on our Tabernacle: when our mountain is made strong: Now, now is a time for trust, but not in our mountain, (for it is a mountain of Ice and may soon dissolve) but in our God. *Halcyon dayes* to some, are temptations to security, but to Saints, times for trust: to Carnal persons Lures and Duckoys to Pride, but to Believers, seasons for dependance. Now it is, that a Saint owns God as the Author, not chance or his own wit and industry, and implores his God to be the Preserver and Blesser of his enjoyments. When our Cistern is full, our trust must be not in it, but the *m* Fountain. At our *fullest tables*, we must acknowledge, that as bread is the *n* staff of our lives, so that staff cannot support, unless held in Gods Hand. Gods blessing is the only stay of that staff of bread. Man lives not by bread alone, indeed not so much by bread, as by the *o* word of Blessing that proceeds out of Gods mouth.

m Cant. 4 15.
n Isa. 3. 1.
o Mat. 4. 4.

2. *The time of adversity*. This also is a seasonable time for trust; when we have no bread to eat, but that of carefulness: nor wine to drink, but that of affliction and astonishment: no nor water neither, but that of our own Tears. Now is a time, not for overgrieving, murmuring, sinking, desponding, despairing, but for trusting.

In a Tempest, then a Believer thinks it seasonable to cast Anchor upward. Thus did good *p Jehoshaphat*. O our God, we know not what to do, only our eyes are unto thee. *David*, what time I am *p* afraid, I will trust in thee. Times of trouble are proper times for trust, be the Trouble either Spiritual or Temporal.

p 2 Chron. 20 12.
q Psal. 56. 3.

1. *Spiritual trouble*: Doth the child of light walk in darkness? in such midnight darkness, that he hath no light? now is a time to *y trust in the Name of the Lord, and to stay himself upon his God*, Doth God take *Job* by the neck, and shake him even to pieces? Doth he set him up for his mark, and shoot such arrows into his Soul, that the poyson of them drinks up his spirits, why now, when God is killing, yea, though he *z* kills, *Job* will trust. His Faith lives in the midst of death. Is a godly *Heman* so scar'd with the terrours of God, that he is even *a* distracted, though he be at his wits end, yet not at his faiths end. *Heman* will pray and trust, and hope even now, in this his day of Spiritual trouble.

r Isa. 50. 10.
s Job 13. 15.
a Psal. 88. 13, 15.

2. *Temporal*: Is it an evil time? A time of personal distress and visitation,

Mic. 7. 7, 8, 9.

fitation. A time of wants or weakneſs, doth the Barrel of meal begin to fail, and the Cruſe of Oyl ſink? *Is there no fruit in the Vine, doth the labour of the Olive fail, are the flocks cut off from the fold, and are there no Herds in the ſtall? Now, now is a time for* Habakkuk *to believe, believing to* b *truſt, and truſting to rejoyce in the Lord, and to joy in the God of his Salvation.* Throw a *Jonah* over board into the raging Sea, bury him alive in the Whales Belly, *let the floods compaſs him about, and all Gods Billows paſs over him, yet even then* Jonah *remembers God, and with the eye of his truſt dares look towards his Holy Temple,* Jon. 2. 1, to 9. Let holy *Paul* have the ſentence of death upon him, yet he will truſt, 2 *Cor.* 1. 9, 10. and ſo will *David, though he walk in the very valley of the ſhadow of death,* Pſal. 23. 4 Be the trouble what it will be, Faith knows what to do, *viz.* to flye by the wings of truſt, to him that is the hope of *Iſrael,* and his Saviour in the time of trouble, *Jer.* 14. 8. *Iſ.* 33. 2. Truſt in God in a ſad condition, as a believers *Alexipharmacum præſtantiſſimum,* his choyceſt medicine, preſervative, Antidote againſt fainings, ſwoonings, ſinking. 'Tis like that *Cornucum Indorum poculum,* which *Philoſtrates* ſpeaks of, *lib.* 3. *c.* 1. viz. A Goblet out of which the *Indian* Princes drank, and then lookt on themſelves as ſecure, from the aſſaults, either of fire, ſword or poiſon.

b Hab. 3. 17, 18

VI. And laſtly, *How Faith or Truſt exerts, puts forth, demeans and beſtirs it ſelf in theſe ſignal ſeaſons. Pſal.* 37. 39.

I. *In times of Fulneſs and Proſperity.* When it goes well with us and ours; when the Candle of the Lord ſhines on us, and our Tabernacle; when our lines fall in pleaſant places, and our God makes us to lie down in green and Fat paſtures; when we are as the wings of a Dove, covered with ſilver and her fathers with yellow gold; when with *Judah,* we waſh our garments in wine and our cloaths in the Blood of grapes. Now, now is a fair opportunity for Faith or Truſt to exert it ſelf, yea and to appear gloriouſly. And indeed it requires no leſs than the utmoſt of Faiths skil, to ſteer the Soul handſomly in this ſerene and ſmooth-faced *Calme.* And ſo,

First, Faith or truſt looks upward, and there fixeth its Eye on God and on the things of God.

1. *On God:* and ſo Holy Faith delivers her ſelf, in ſuch Effata as theſe, *viz.*

1. *How full ſoever my large Ciſtern be, It is the Lord, and the Lord alone that is the grand Fountain, or rather Ocean of all my enjoyment.* All my c Springs are in him. All my ſtreams are from him. Faith freely and humbly acknowledges, that all outward as well as inward bleſſings, that

c Pſal 87. 7.

every

every *good and perfect gift is from* b *above and cometh down from the Father of lights.* Every good Gift; not only those transcendents of Grace and Glory, of union with Christ here, and full fruition of Christ hereafter; but also all temporal good things, be they more or less, even to an Hoof, or Shoo-lachet, Faith confesseth that it hath nothing, but what it c received from God. As God in mercy hath d promised; so God in bounty hath given me these earthly enjoyments. It is the Lord that gave, saith believing e *Job*; *Riches, Honour, Advancement, promotion, they all come of God; Not from the East, nor West, nor South*, i. e. *neither this way, nor that way, nor any way of man, but God putteth down one, and* f *setteth up another.* Faith knows, that as all good things come from God, so all success in business, all blessings on our Labours, Callings, Affairs, is only from the Lord. It is the g Lord alone that makes whatsoever *Joseph* doth to prosper. The Disciples may fish and tug all night, but till h Christ comes, they can catch nothing. 'Tis the i blessing of the Lord alone that maketh rich.

b Jam. 1. 17,
c 1 Cor. 4. 7.
d Mat. 6. 33. 1 Tim. 4. 8.
e Job 1. 21.
f Psal. 75. 6, 7.
g Gen. 39. 23.
h Mar. 4. 19.
i Prov. 10. 22.

2. *Since all that I have is received of God, I may not, I must not boast, crack, k glory, as if I received it not.* Let others, saith Faith, thank their own labours, wisdom, policy, pains, *wickedly sacrifice to their own nets and burn incense to their own drags*, as if by them their portion were fat, and their meat plenteous. Faith leaves it to the *Atheist* to bless himself in being *Fortunæ suæ Deus*, or with that Dunghil wretch, who being excited to thank God for a rich crop of Corn, replyes, *Thank God shall I?* Nay, rather thank my Dung-cart; Faith is of another kind of complexion. O far be it, saith she, that I should so much as in my heart, say, that my m power, and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth.

k 1 Cor. 4. 7.
l Hab. 1. 16.
m Deu. 8. 17, 18. Dan. 4. 30.

3. *In as much as all that I have is from Gods blessing and bounty, this whole all shall be for his praise and Glory.* Since all my enjoyments are of him, it is but just that all should be to n him. He that is the *Alpha*, the beginning of all my mercies, shall be the * *Omega*, the end and Center of all my Services. These Earthly treasures, saith Faith, shall be improved for high and Heavenly ends. Not thrown into the sink of a voluptuous paunch, not so much to an Hawk or Hound, but laid, and lock'd up in Gods Treasury, *i. e.* the backs and bosoms of Christs poor members. Faith is resolved to improve Satans greatest weapon (*i. e.* the World and its sweetest enjoyments) against himself, will break his Hairy scalp with his own cudgels, turn his own Cannons against him, that is, by reducing all its worldly enjoyments into a serviceable end and subordination for the glory of God. Faith disdains to take that course

n Rom. 11. 36.
* *Dii terminorem quod geris, imperas. Huc omne principium huc refer exitum.* Horat.

way,

way of curing the luſt of the Eyes, by plucking them out, and to ſlake the thirſt of Riches by a profuſe caſting of it into the Sea, to conquer the Worlds honour and applauſe, by turning *Hermit*, and hiding of its head in a lonely Cave. No, Faith prepares the Soul for a Nobler way of Victory, not by ſlighting the Bait, but by digeſting of it into Food; by uſing of creature-comforts, as ſo many rounds in *Jacobs Ladder*, to Mount it ſelf and others the nearer Heaven. Faith conſiders that the King of Heaven expects his Toll, Tribute, Cuſtom, out of all our
o Luke 12. 48. Receits, that where much is given, there more is *o* required: and juſtly fears, leſt if it ſhould not pay its God the Intereſt, it ſhould, and that
p Iſa. 5. 2, &c. juſtly forfeit and loſe the Principal. Therefore the more 'tis *p* dung'd and dreſt, and pruned, the more abundant cluſters it brings forth, and ſuch as are acceptable to the palate of the Vine-dreſſer.

4. *Becauſe all my enjoyments proceed from Gods free-Gift, or rather his Loan, therefore they muſt and ſhall be readily ſurrendred to Gods Call.* If God will continue theſe outward comforts, ſaith Faith, I will own and improve his bounty, and yet if he thinks fit to call in his debt, I will revere, and ſubmit to his Sovereignty. Let God give, and give abundantly, *Job* will bleſs. Let God take, *Job* knows; he takes but his own, and
q Job 1. 21. on that account will bleſs him then. *Job* has learnt to bleſs a *q* taking, as well as a giving God. Here are Lands, Houſes, Children, Parents, dear enjoyments indeed, but yet ſuch as are not my Fee-ſimple, ſaith
r Luk. 14. 33. Faith, I am only a Tenant at will. *r* All theſe, yea and much more, nay, Life and all muſt and ſhall be denyed, reſigned, when God calls for them. A Gracious heart knows that he cannot *poſſibly make* ſo much of his worldly enjoyments any other way, as by offering them up for Chriſts ſake, and reſigning them to Chriſts Call. *Mary*, s oyntment could never have been carried to a better market than it was, when poured ſo freely, on her dear Saviours head. Be a Believers enjoyments what they will, never ſo great, never ſo precious, ſuppoſe his veſſel laden with Pearls, yet even theſe ſhall overboard, rather than hazard the
ſ 1 Tim. 1. 19. *ſ* wrack of Faith, or a good Conſcience.

5. *Now I enjoy moſt from God, now even now 'tis neceſſary that I ſhould truſt moſtly, yea, wholly and only in God.* Thus *Jehoſhaphat*, 2 Cro. 20. 12. Thus *Aſa*, though he had an Army almoſt innumerable, no leſs than
t 2 Chron. 14. 8, 11. *t* five hundred and fourſcore thouſand men, all of them mighty Men of Valour, yet he looks on all of them as Cyphers, as nothing without a God, and therefore now puts forth his truſt in God, and flyes to him for help. Here indeed was a Noble truſt. 'Tis difficult to truſt God in our greateſt wants, but more difficult to truſt him in our greateſt Weal.

Weal. 'Twas a brave act of Truſt in *u Job*, when he reſolves to Truſt in God, though he killed him. An high attainment in *Paul*, when he had nothing, to be as one that poſſeſſed all things. Yea, but, when God quickens, when we are full and abound, when our Cup runs over, now to truſt in a God and not in our Cup, when our ſails are fill'd with a Trade-wind, then to confide only in our *Pilot*; when we have all things, and yet then to look on the creature as utterly inſufficient, and to lean wholly on Gods All-ſufficiency, This ſpeaks the moſt ſpiritual, and refined Truſt, and yet this is that which Faith exerts in it's fulleſt enjoyments. Where mercy abounds, Truſt ſuper-abounds, reputing the Creature as nothing at all, and eſteeming God as All in All.

u Job 13. 15.

6 *Theſe outward enjoyments are indeed ſweet, but my God the Author of them, is infinitely more ſweet.* They have all, even the moſt *defæcate* of them, a Tang and Smack of the Cask and Chanel, through which they come. *At, at, Dulcius ex ipſo Fonte* --A Single God is infinitely more ſweet, than the enjoyment of all created Good things, that come from him. Though indeed, I can ſmile, when my Corn and Wine, and Oil encreaſeth, and bear a part with my Valleys, when they ſtand ſo thick with Corn, that they even laugh and ſing. Alas, this without the enjoyment of a God is but a meer *Riſus ſardonius*. The leaping of the Head after the Soul is gone. True indeed, theſe are ſome of Gods Love tokens, but what are theſe to his Perſon and Preſence. Theſe indeed are rich Cabinets, but Oh the *x* Light of his Countenance, That, That's the Jewel. In having theſe I can ſay with *Eſau*, I have *y* רב Much; but give me him, I can exult and Triumphing ſay with *Jacob*, I have כל All. Theſe are ſome of his Left-hand favours, ſome of his Bottels of Milk, and gifts, a fit portion for *Iſhmael* and the ſons of *Ketturah*; But 'tis an *Iſaac*'s inheritance, waters of the upper fountains my Soul thirſts after, thoſe Right-hand bleſſings, His *z* preſence, His Soul-raviſhing preſence, in which there is *fulneſs of joy and pleaſures for evermore*. Theſe may ſerve for my comfortable paſſage, but nothing but Himſelf can content and ſatisfie for my All-ſufficient *a* Portion. According to that, *Pſal.* 36. 8. He alone can fill up all the gaping chinks and chaſms of my Soul. He is my *Sun and ſhield*, Pſal. 84. 11. my *Root and Branch*, Iſa. 11. 10. my foundation and *Corner-ſtone*, Iſa. 28. 16. my *Sword and Shield*, Deut. 33. 29. He only can anſwer all my deſires, All my neceſſities. *Deus meus, & omnia*, my God and my All. Thus Faith fixes its aſpect on God.

x Pſal. 4. 6.

y Gen. 33, 9 11

z Pſal. 16. 11.

a Pſal. 73. 26

y *Altera sapio.*

2. *On the things of God*: And so Faith concludes, *I have* y *higher and nobler projects, designs of deeper concernment then to sit down*, ingulph and please my self in these poor, earthly, drossie, * dirty things here below. I have many Corruptions within, these are to be mortified; many Temptations without, these are to be resisted; many sweet motions and whispers of the Spirit, these are to be cherished: many weak graces, these are to be strengthned; many personal, relational duties, these are to be performed; in a word, an effectual Calling and Election to be made sure, this above all is to be regarded. Faith discovers a *World beyond* the Moon, and Trades thither: Leaving the men of the *earth to load* themselves with clay and coles, Faith pursues its staple *commodity and* traffiques for grace and glory. Thus z *David*, when he had branded the Worldling for disquieting himself in vain, for heaping up riches, and knowing not who shall gather them, with an *holy* disdain turns *his* back upon the World, as not worth his thoughts, saying, *and now Lord, what wait I for? q. d.* It is true, I have Riches, and Honour, a Crown, a Kingdom, but is this the portion I could be content to sit down with? *No, no, My hope is in thee, Deliver me from all my transgressions*, v.8. Let them that love the World enjoy it, but Lord, pay not my *portion in* such adulterate coyn, but in pardon of sin, and peace of conscience, this, this is that I wait for. Thus * *Luther* having a rich Present sent him, professed with an holy boldness to God, *That such things should not serve his turn.* He was not taken with Pebbels, his nobler soul flew a higher, and was fixt on Pearls. It is Gods favour that the Subjects of the King of Heaven desire rather then his preferment; *like him* that preferr'd *Alexander's* kiss before a great sum of money, given by *Alexander* to another. Thus Faith looks upward on God, and the things of God, and acts accordingly.

* *Excelsa pia mentis generositas supra omnem rerum humanarum speciem erecta.*

z Psal. 39. 6, 7.

* *Valde proceratus sum*, &c.

a *Aquila non capit muscas.*

2. *Faith or trust looks downward, on its fullest and sweetest Temporal Enjoyments.* And so,

1. *It accurately weighs these enjoyments in the Ballance of the Sanctuary, and so makes a just estimate of them as to their worth and value.* Faith knows that generally men look at the things which are seen, & therefore the things that seem best, that glitter most, are the best delights of most of the children of men, the desire of their eyes, the joy of their hearts; These they over-rate, & not only esteem them highly but adore them superstitiously, as a God, or their chiefest good. But now faith brings these to the touchstone and standard, and there interprets them as they are, according to their just value, finds them to be but the delights of sence *fortuna ludibria*, the sparks of nature, the trials of humane folly, at the best

but

but helps of humane frailty. Particularly, faith passes a twofold judgement on them, Negative and Positive.

1. Negative, And so Faith concludes.

1. *These, and all such like earthly enjoyments, never yet of themselves, benefitted any man for heaven.* True, some things are so good in themselves, that he that hath them cannot but be good, and the better for them: Such as are the grace of God to us, and the graces of the Spirit in us. These find us evil, but make us good: But no man was ever made good, meerly by riches and worldly wealth. These indeed have found some really good, and made them less good then they were, and have found many seemingly good, whom they have made stark nought. How often hath a fat preferment spoil'd a good Preacher, and caused him, with him, when the fish is caught, to lay aside his Net? Usually the more we have of this World, the less we mind the World to come. Our place in *Paris* makes us forget our portion in *Paradice*. That earth which we tread under our feet, gets up into our hearts, and makes them more earthly than the earth we tread on.

2. *This high mountain, on whose top I stand, adds not a Cubit to my stature in Gods eyes.* God values not, as men do, by the rate or Subsidy-book. Not many Wise, not many Noble, not many Rich, but God hath chosen the *b* poor of this World, Rich in faith. *b* Jam. 2. 15.

3. Therefore my true blessedness doth not, cannot consist in the fullest confluence of these worldly enjoyments. I may not, I dare not with that rich *c* fool sing a *requiem* to my soul, and bid it take its ease, for it hath goods laid up for many years. *Here is not my rest.* Faith, like the *Turtle*, finds no rest for the sole of its foot even in a deluge of Creature-comforts. Suppose a Believers *d* sons *as plants grown up in their youth*, and his daughters, *as corner stones polisht after the similitude of a Palace*, suppose his *garner full affording all manner of store*, His Oxen strong to labour, and his *sheep bringing forth thousands, and ten thousands in the streets*, though the blear-eyed World should pronounce him *e* happy, that is in such a case, how would the Believer immediately reply with the *Psalmists Epanorthosis*, (or, in expres contradiction rather to so gross a mistake) *yea, blessed are the people*, they rather or they only are *blessed which have the Lord for their God.* Thus Faith concludes Negatively. *c* Luk. 12. 19. *d* Psal. 144. 12, 13. *e* Vers. 15.

2. Positively, That Divine Lesson which *Solomon*, the wisest of meer men had, by such difficult and costly experiments at length learnt, Faith hath got by heart, and in the face of the World concludes with him: *f Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity.* The assertion is repeated, as in *Pha-* *f* Eccl. 1. 2.

raohs dream, to ſhew its certainty, and the term of Vanity doubled, to manifeſt the tranſcendency, and multiplicity of this Vanity, There is a fivefold Vanity, which Faith diſcovers in all its Creature-enjoyments, *viz.* in that they are.

g Eccl. 1. 3. 1. *Unprofitable.* Thus the Preacher, *What* g *profit hath a man of all his labour which he hath taken under the Sun?* What profit? Why, he hath filled his hands with Air, he hath laboured for the Wind, *Eccl.* 5. 16. Juſt ſo much, and no more, than *Septimius Severus* got, who having run through various and great employments, openly acknowledges, *Omnia fui, ſed nihil profuit.* Creature-comforts are not bread, *Iſa.* 55. 2, 3. They profit no more than the dream of a full meal doth an hungry man, or that Feaſt which the *h Magitian* made the *German* Nobles, who thought they fared very deliciouſly, but when they departed, found themſelves hungry. In a day of wrath, ſickneſs, death, can riches *profit? Prov.* 11. 4. *Ezek.* 7, 19. Juſt as much as a bag of gold hung about the neck of a drowning man.

h Cornel. a Lap. Comment. in Iſa. 55. 2.

2. *Hurtful and pernicious,* *Solomon* obſerved that *Riches were kept for the owners thereof to their* i *hurt.* Hence it is that k *Agur* prayes againſt them: *Give me not riches, leſt I be full and deny thee;* as if abundance made way for *Atheiſm*, in thoſe that know not how to manage it. *Maximilian* the Second was ſenſible of this, who refuſed to hoard up a maſs of Treaſure, fearing leſt by falling in love therewith, of a ſoveraign Lord, he ſhould become a ſervant to the *Mammon* of unrighteouſneſs. Now the hurtfulneſs of Creature-comforts ſhews it ſelf in ſeveral particulars.

i Eccl. 5. 13.
k Prov. 30. 8, 9.

1. *Faith knows that they are apt to puff up and ſwell the heart with the Tympany of pride.* Hence that great *Caution*, *Deut.* 8. 10, *to the end.* The uſual attendants on riches are Pride and Confidence. Hence *Paul* to *Timothy*, charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded. How apt are men to be lifted up with the things of this lower World? Riches at once ſink the mind downward in covetous cares, and lift it upward in proud conceits. To ſee a man rich in purſe, and poor in ſpirit is a great rarity.

1 Tim. 6. 17.

2. *Faith knows, that great enjoyments are great ſnares and powerful temptations to many other luſts,* ſuch as are Coveteouſneſs, Luſt, Luxury, Security, *&c.* The plenty of places oft occaſion much wickedneſs in perſons. Rich *Sodom* was a nurſery of all impiety. *Jeſurun*, when he waxeth fat, is apt to kick; *Deut.* 32. 15. And when *Iſrael* is fed to the full, m then ſhe commits abomination.

m Ezek. 16. 39. 49.

3. *Faith is ſenſible how apt temporal comforts are to make us* ſleight

ſleight ſpiritual graces, and heavenly Communion.

1. *Spiritual graces.* Our digging for ſilver and ſearching for gold, makes us too too apt to neglect that which is better than thouſands of gold and ſilver, even durable ſubſtance. The radiant ſplendor of theſe things here below, dazzles our eyes to thoſe things above. Whiles *Martha* is much *cumbred about many things, ſhe forgets to act *Maries* part and to purſue that one thing neceſſary. How often do outward comforts entangle the ſpirits, weaken the graces, ſtrengthen the corruptions, even of good men! There was a ſerious truth in that Atheiſtical ſcorn of *Julian*, who when he ſpoiled the Chriſtians of their outward eſtates, told them, *He did it to make them more ready for the Kingdom of Heaven.* Many really godly loſe much in ſpirituals by gaining much in temporals; they have been impoveriſh'd by their riches. They are indeed rich in grace, whoſe graces are not hindred by their riches, whoſe ſouls proſper when their bodies proſper. To ſee the daughter of *Tyre* come with her gift, to ſee the *rich among the people, entreat Chriſts favour, and give up themſelves to him; This indeed is a rare ſight. To be rich or great in the World, is a great temptation. When we flouriſh in the fleſh, we are apt to wither in the ſpirit. The ſcorching Sun-beams of proſperity too too often cauſe a drouth, and then a dearth, a famine in the ſoul, and make us throw of thoſe robes of righteouſneſs which the wind of affliction makes us to gird on the faſter. The World is of an encroaching nature, hard it is to enjoy it, and not come into bondage to it. Let *Abraham* caſt but a little more than ordinary reſpect on *Hagar*, and it will not be long ere ſhe begin to contect with, yea, crow over her Miſtreſs,

*Luk. 10. 41.

*Pſal. 45. 12.

2. *Spiritual Communion with God.* Worldly comforts are always dog'd with worldly buſineſs, and this too often eats up our time for *Communion* with God. It is a very difficult thing to make our way into the preſence of God through the throng of worldly incumbrances. Worldly employments & enjoyments are exceeding apt not only to blunt, but to turn the edge of our affections from an holy commerce with God. Faith knows what a Task, what an *Herculean* labour it is, after it hath paſt a day amidſt worldly profits, and been entertained with the delights and pleaſures a full eſtate affords, now to bring a whole heart to God, when at night it returns into his preſence. The World in this caſe doth by the Saint, as the little child by the mother, if it cannot keep the mother from going out, it will cry after to go with her. If the World cannot keep us from going to Religious duties, it will cry to be taken along with us; and much ado there is to part it and our affections. Thus Faith diſcovers the danger and hurtfulneſs of Creature-enjoyments. But more than this.

4. *Faith*

4. Faith knows that these outward things are perishing as well as unprofitable and hurtful. Mutable, inconsistant, fading * Vanities, Bubbles, Pictures drawn in Icy Tablets, grass growing on the tops of houses. Faith hath seen and heard the Providence of God ring the changes of mens Estates all the world over. Now exalted and lifted up, within a while depress't and cast down. Now honourable eftsoon abased, the rich becoming poor, *Naomi* becoming *Mara*, Hills levelled into Valleys, and great Mountains becoming Plains. That spoke of the wheel which is now aloft; (*as the Captive King told his Conqueror*) is quickly turn'd to the ground and brought low. The best earthly estate, is in it self a tottering estate. No *o* mountain so strong but may soon be moved. What we call substance, Faith knows is but a shadow, and hath no continuance. There is no assurance in any earthly inheritance. How soon doth God sequester it from us, or us from it. These externals cannot be held with *all our* care, nor kept with all our policy and power. The best of earthly excellencies may soon be taken from us. *Jobs p* Crown quickly falls off from *Jobs* head. Not only is all flesh grass, but all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field, *Isa* 48. 6. Not only is man of a brittle Constitution in nature, but all the perfections which he hath, be they either Moral or Civil accomplishments, on this side grace are brittle too. Reason, Scripture, experience, abundantly attest this Truth. The *q* fashion of this world, saith the Apostle, passeth away: As fashions in the world alter and change every day, so doth the fashion of this World. Creature-comforts are not so properly possessions as *r* Pageants, which whilst they please us, pass away from us in a moment. Those we have *here are running* banquets, delicate, and served in with state, but soon over.

* *Felicitas umbratilis.*

o Psal. 30. 6, 7. *Summis negatum est stare diu.*

p Job 19. 9.

q 1 Cor. 7. 30.

r Quod miraris pompa est. Ostenduntur istæ res, non possidentur & dum placent transeunt, Sen. Epist 110.

5. Faith makes yet a farther discovery, and finds that these Creature-comforts are false, deceitful, lying Vanities. Which appears,

1. *In the report they make of themselves, and of their own worth.* If you look upon the bill of the Creature, it puts down not only an *hundred* for fifty, but a million for a mite. Like the Title-pages of some empty Pamphlets, more in them than in the whole book.

2. *In the Promises which they make to us.* It promises that in the enjoyment thereof we shall be happy, whereas we are both poor and miserable in the fullest possession of the Creature, unless God himself be our portion. It promises to ease us of our cares, yet it doth but multiply them like drink to a dropsy-man, so far from slaking that it enflames the thirst. Riches are not food, but fuel to our desires, & are so far from satisfying, that they but widen the throat. They do not allay our appetite as bread doth, when received and digested, but enflame it, as oyl doth, when cast into

into the fire. It promiseth to protect us but performes no more than the great tree doth from a soaking and lasting storm. It promises to continue with us, though Father and Mother forsake, yet it will not, whereas it usually proves like *Absalons* Mule, then apt to go from under us, when we most need it. Thus the Creatures are deceitful, *i.e.* They are objectively deceitful; through the deceitfulness of our hearts and lusts, we are deceived about them, if not by them. They frustrate our expectation, when our hopes of advantage by them are at the highest: seldom or never make good to the enjoyer, what they promised to the expectant. Like *Jonah's* Gourd, when most needed, then they wither: Like *Hesters* invitation of *Haman* to a banquet with the King, which fill'd his bladder with windy hopes, but soon after ended in his Ruine.

6. And lastly, Faith knows that Creature comforts are *f* unsatisfying Vanities. This the *Philosopher* saw by the dim eye of Nature, concluding, that the world being Orbicular, of a round figure, could never fill up the corners of an heart, which is Triangular. The Creature were a God to us, if it could do this to us: Kindle thirstings it may, but quench none: Can beget a thousand fears and cares, but quiet none: Here *the eye is not* * *satisfied with seeing, nor the ear with hearing.* The Soul still crying out, *Give, give.* It is God alone satisfies, *Psal.* 36 8, 9. It is only a God in Christ that can give the soul rest, *Mat.* 11.29. God would not rest from his works of creation, till man was formed. Man cannot rest from his longing desires till God be enjoyed, and then, and not till then can an holy *David* sing a *Lullaby* to his soul. † *Return unto thy rest O my Soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.* Faith having thus expresst her judgment concerning the true Nature and worth of Creature comforts, concludes her work in three resolves.

f Isa. 55. 2.

* Eccle. 1. 8.

† Psal. 116. 7.

1. *In the midst of these my enjoyments, I must take heed that my heart sits loose from them.* These handsome Pictures must be only hang'd on the wall, not glued to it. Though riches encrease, I may not, must not set my heart on them. Thus the *Psalmist*, *Psal.* 62.10. Use them I may, love them I may not, 1 *John* 2. 15, 16. My affections may perchance pitch, but must not fix on these things below, *Col.* 3. 2. Look upon them I must with an holy indifferency, and use them as if I used them not, *u* possess them as if I possessed them not. The zeal of my Spirit must be for Heaven and Heavenly things, My soul must press hard only after God, as *David* did, *Psal.* 63. 1, 8.

u 1 Cor. 7. 31.

2. *Though I have all these comforts yet I may not, must not inordinately, immoderately, carnally delight and rejoyce in them.* Thus the Apostle enjoyns, 1 *Cor.* 7. 29. It remains, that both they that have wives be-

be as if they had none, & they that rejoyce as though they rejoyced not, and they that buy as though they poſſeſſed not, & they that uſe this world as not abuſing it. As we are apt to undergo, to do too little in heavenly things, ſo we are apt to overdo, or to do too much in worldly things.

Our two great failings, *viz.* That we do but make uſe as it were of thoſe things we ſhould enjoy, and that we enjoy thoſe things we ſhould only make uſe of. Oh, the Divine Art of holy moderation in the uſe of our ſweeteſt worldly enjoyments is known and practiſed by few.

3. And laſtly, *As I may not over-love them, nor inordinately delight in them, ſaith Faith, ſo leaſt of all may I put the leaſt truſt or confidence in them.* I muſt not in the leaſt lean upon them. Not ſay to Gold, to fine gold, *Thou art my confidence*, Job 31. 24. i. e. My ſoul may not ſecurely reſt and rely on gold, or golden enjoyments, as if theſe could ſtand by me, when all friends fail, as if theſe would not ſee us want any thing, nor ſuffer us to be wronged as long as they laſt, which God knows, is but for a moment. All theſe enjoyments can neither make me better nor wiſer, nor render my life more ſafe & comfortable, nor ſanctifie our ſouls, nor ſatisfie our deſires: Therefore ſaith faith, I will truſt in God only, whom I can never truſt too much, not in the creature, wch I can never truſt too little.

II. *In times of ſadneſs, afflictions, wants, ſufferings, miſeries*; when the hand of the Lord is gone out againſt us, and he greatly multiplies our ſorrows, when he breaks us with breach upon breach, and runs upon us like a Giant, when his Arrows ſtick faſt in us, & his hand preſſeth us ſore, when he ſows Sackcloth on our skin, and defiles our horn in the duſt, when we are fain to eat aſhes like bread, and to mingle our drink with weeping. Now, now is a time for a Saints truſt to beſtir it ſelf to purpoſe. In this ſtorm and tempeſt, wherein the waves mount up to heaven, and go down again to the depths, Faith ſits at Helm, and preſerves the Soul from ſhipwrack. Faith takes his Serpent by the tail, handles it, and turns it into an harmleſs wand, yea, into an *Aarons* rod, budding with glory and immortality: Faith encounters this ſeeming *Goliah* of Affliction, grapples with it, not as a match, but as a vanquiſht underling. Let miſery dreſs her ſelf like the cruelest fury, come forth guarded with all her dismal attendants, ſighs, groans, tears, wants, woes, Faith ſets its foot on the neck of this Queen of fears, inſults and triumphs over her. When the heart and fleſh are apt to fail, when Soul and ſpirit are apt to ſink, and ſwoon away, faith draws forth its bottle, and adminiſters a reviving Cordial. In a word, in a Sea, an Ocean, a Deluge of trouble, amidſt all ſtorms, winds, tempeſts, yea, an *Herricane* of ſorrows and miſeries, Faith knows where and how to caſt Anchor. According to that of our Saviour,

Saviour, μὴ ταρασσέσθω ὑμῶν. Let not your heart be troubled, so troubled, as a ship tost in a Tempest: ye believe in God, believe also in me. Faith is that great Antidote, Cordial, *Panacea*, *Catholicon*, Heal-all of all Diseases: This is that that makes a believer live in the midst of Death. But more particularly in this tempestuous Condition, Faith doth these three things.

* Ne perturbetur, commoveatur.

1. *It warily avoids some dangerous Rocks and Quick sands.*
2. *It heedfully looks to its bottom in which it sails.*
3. *It accurately observes its Compass by which it steers.*

I. *There are some Rocks, Shelves, Quick-sands, like Scylla* and *Charybdis*, against which in such a dark Condition, the Soul is apt to split it self. *These Faith avoids with utmost Care*, they are six.

1. *Distracting, distrustfull, carking, corroding, heart-dividing, heart-stabbing Cares.* Faith according to the Apostles *o* command, μηδὲν μεριμνᾶτε: is carkingly careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication makes its requests known to God. True indeed, a Believer is not, may not, dares not be, slothfully, negligently careless of his Body, Estate, Relations, Affairs, particular calling, *Rom.* 12. 17. Faith knows, that he that endeavours not by honest, prudent, diligent, care and fore-sight, to *p* provide for his own is worse than an infidel. And yet Faith is far from all carking Cares, such as distract the head, and *q* divide the Heart from other and better things. *Faith takes no thought for its life, what it shall eat, neither for the Body, wherewith it shall be cloathed*, Faith leavs that to God, *who feeds the Sparrows and cloathes the Lillies.* 'Tis for Gentiles and unbelievers to cry out solicitously, *what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithall shall we be cloathed?* My Heavenly Father knows that I have need of all these things. It belongs to him to provide. 'Tis his work, I leave it with him. All that *r* Care, I cast upon him, he doth and will care for me, I may not, must not, saith Faith, speak against God, as did the *s Israelites*, saying, *Can God furnish a table in the Wilderness?* As he hath given waters, can he give bread also, can he provide flesh for his people?

o Phil. 4. 6.
p 1 Tim. 5. 8.
q Mat. 6. 25, &c.
r 1 Pet. 5. 7.
s Ps. 78. 19, 20.

2. *Carnal Counsel, using unlawful and Carnal Confidence, trusting in unLawful means.* Say not when God pursues, *t Ashur shall save you, and you will ride on horses.* In sickness Faith will not run first to the Physician. That was Good *u Asa's* great sin. 'Twas holy *David's* great failing, to say, (though but in his Heart) *Nothing better for me then to escape into the Land of the x Philistines.* Alas poor *David*, to what a shift art thou now driven? what to the uncircumcised *Philistines?* Is it because there is not a God in *Israel?* Oh, thou wilt quickly find this

t Hos. 14. 3.
u 2 Chr. 6. 12.
x 1 Sam 27 1.

ſtarting Hole, to be only a going out of Gods Bleſſing, into a warmer Sun. To think by ſinning to avoid ſuffering, is by ſaving the finger, to make way for a ſtab at the heart. To purſue, and obtain Deliverance, by unlawful ways, is to fiſh with, and loſe, an hook of gold, and only to catch a *Gudgeon*, to preſerve the Body, but to deſtroy the Soul.

3. *Stinting, and limitting the Holy one of Iſrael, to this or that particular, means, way, time, and manner of deliverance:* So as to ſay, if God help not this way, nothing will do. If not now, never. Faith remembers, This was the *Iſraelites* God provoking Sin. They *x limited the Holy one of Iſrael.* Thus *Naaman*, 2 *Kings* 5. 11. *Behold, ſaith he, I thought he will ſurely come out; and ſtand, and call, and ſtrike,* and no other way will ſerve him. He thought thus, and thus, but the man was no leſs Blind, than Leprous. He was at once both proud and vain in his imaginations, and he ſhall know that the Almighty will not ſail by his narrow compaſs, nor dance, as I may ſo ſay, after his *Pipe.* God hath more ways to the wood than one, and always more than many out of it, though we at preſent ſee them not. God hath Extraordinary means to bear up, when Ordinary ones fail. God can turn Royſons into Antidotes; Hindrances into Furtherances; Deſtructions themſelves into Deliverances. Has *Elijah* no meat? Rather than fail, The devouring *y* Ravens ſhall be his Caterers. Is *Jonah* in danger of Drowning? Rather than ſink a *z* Whale ſhall have commiſſion, to be both his ſhip and Pilot too, to ſet him ſafe on ſhore. Faith knows that an Almighty God can work, with, yea and without, above, contrary to means, and doth on purpoſe many times ſtain the pride and glory of ſome means, that ſeem moſt probable, that we may *obſerve and adore* his wiſe Providence in finding out, and bleſſing the uſe of others more unlikely; that we may prefer his *Jordan*, before our *Abanah.*

x Pſal. 78. 41.

y 1 Kin. 14. 6.

z Jon. 2. 10.

4. *Impatient fretting, murmuring, and quarrelling againſt Gods Diſpenſations.* This was poor *Jonah's* great ſtumble. Peeviſh man! *Doeſt thou well to be angry,* and that with thy God? *yea* ſaith he, *to the very death, Jon* 4. 9. The moſt fooliſh anſwer that ever dropt from the mouth of an Holy man. Humble *Aaron* was better inſtructed. He knew it was no ſafe kicking againſt the Pricks. That nothing was to be got by ſtriking again, by repining againſt God, but more blows. And therefore when God had killed both his ſons at a blow, *He* humbly *holds his a peace*: his heart and tongue were both ſilent. True indeed, we may not be ſenſeleſs and ſtupid under ſufferings. Had all the *Martyrs* had the *Dead Palſie*, before they went to the ſtake, their ſufferings had been far leſs Glorious. But yet, though we may not be ſtupid or

a Lev. 10. 2, 3.

Stoical,

Stoical, we must be patient and submissive. Though we may not be like the *Caspian Sea*, that neither ebbs, nor flows, yet we must take heed of being like swelling, roaring waves and billows. Though Gods Turtles may, through infirmity flutter, yet they may not be like Bulls, when caught in a net, raving. *I was* c *dumb*, saith *David*, *because thou didst it.* Away then with those surly looks, that do as it were, enter a protest against what we suffer: nay more, beware of those murmuring echo's and replies of Spirit within, against God, who though they seem to yield and run, yet, with the flying *Parthian*, shoot their Arrows backward in discontent against God.

c Psal. 39. 9.

5. *All sinful and ungrounded Doubting of Gods love, in and under sufferings.* How Gods heart inclines, cannot infallibly be gathered from Gods Hand. Faith many times discovers Love in Gods Heart, when it sees nothing but frowns on Gods forehead: and knows, that frequently when his tongue chides, His d Bowels yearn, *Is Ephraim a dear son? is he a pleasant child?* Is he? *Alas no*, Rather he is a pettish, untoward, undutiful child. True, but yet a child, and therefore, *since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still, my Bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him.* Yea more, Faith is so far from arguing, that God has thrown His Love out of His Heart, when he Takes his Rod into his Hand, that it rather from thence argues the quite contrary. I am now therefore beloved, because chastised. *Whom I love, I rebuke and* e *chasten.* Faith knows, that a Fathers Correction, is so far from being an argument of wrath, that it is one of the clearest evidences of Love. Better far to be a chasten'd son, than an undisciplin'd Bastard: No anger like that, *Isa.* 1. 5. *Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more*: and *Ezek.* 16. 42. I will be quiet, and *I will be no more angry. Ephraim is joyned to Idols, Let him alone*, Hos. 4. 17. Then is God most f angry of all, when he refuseth to be angry.

d Jer. 31. 20.

e Rev. 3. 19. Amos. 3. 2. Heb. 12. 6.

f *Tunc maxime irascitur, quando non irascitur; Super omnem iram miseratio ista*, Bern.

6. *Fainting, sinking, desponding, despairing, under Gods Correction.* As Faith looks upon it as a great sin to despise the Lords chastening, so it holds it for no small infirmity, to faint, when corrected by him, *Heb.* 12. 6. This was that for which *David* so roundly chid, and rated his Soul, *why art thou cast down O my Soul, why art thou so disquieted within me? Trust thou in God, Psa.* 42. 11. *If thou faint in the day of Adversity, thy strength is but small*, Prov. 24. 10. It argues thee to be a man of a short, narrow, pusillanious, poor, low Soul, to faint and sink in such a day. Thus we have shewn you the Rocks, the Dangerous Rocks, which Faith warily avoids.

II. *Faith heedfully looks to it's Ship, or Bottom, in which it sails* Wherein she views the Keel, Ballast, Sails; takes care that these be tight, and in good condition.

1. *The Keel, Bulk, or Body of the ship, in which Faith sails, and That is holy Contentation.* This was the Grand, and Highest Lesson, * Phil. 4. 11. that ever a Believing *Paul* learnt, and practised, *viz.* * *In every state Therewith to be content.* What some observe of that earthly Angel, That glory of Her Sex, the Lady *Jane Gray*, That she made misery it self seem amiable, and that the night cloathes of Adversity *did* as much become her, as her day-dressing, is much more true of Holy Contentation, It renders every condition, even the Blackest, lovely. An afflicted Christian, *If contented*, may Truly say with the *Spouse*, Can. 1. 5. *Though I am black, I am comely.* Faith therefore mainly looks to this, and professes, that though she cannot be satisfied with the whole World for her portion, yet she must, will be, and is contented with the least pittance of it for her passage. Has an *Agur* Food, what though Course gordinary Commons? *Prov.* 30. 8. yet 'tis Food: Has *John Baptist* raiment, what though of h *Camels hair*? yet 'tis Raiment: And so long Faith looks upon her self, as obliged to be therewith content, 1 *Tim* 6. 8.

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h Mat. 3. 4.

2. *The Ballast that paises the ship, and that's Humility*, This is that that keeps the Soul steady and makes it ride out the Storm. Pride is that, which swells the heart, Now when a member is swollen, though it grows bigger, yet it grows weaker, and so the more unfit and unable to bear any burthen laid upon it. 'Twas Humility that steel'd *Athanasius* against all his adversaries and sufferings, in that he was, as *Nazianzen* reports him, as truly low in heart, as really high in worth. i Gen. 32. 10. The Humble Soul judges it self i *less then the least of mercies*, justly obnoxious to the greatest Judgments, and therefore no wonder if it can patiently want or undergo any thing.

3. *The sails whereby this well ballasted Ship is carried, and that is Heavenly mindedness.* This indeed is Faith's *Top*, and *Topgallant*, whereby it sails with a full forewind into it's Port and Haven. Faith, minds, savours, sets it's affection on things above, not on things below, *Col.* 3. 2. It's heart is, where it's treasure is, in Heaven. Faith knows, that mixture of earth and dross much weakens the Soul, and makes it unable to suffer, whereas a Soul quickned with heavenly mindedness, that flyes high and looks beyond the Stars, concludes, that a little, a very little of the dreggy creature will serve turn, to pass it through this worldly Pilgrimage, and this greatly enables for suffering; and thus Faith heedfully looks to her bottom.

I III. *Faith*

III. *Faith accurately observes its Compass by which it steers.* Now there are several points in Faiths Compass, or if you will, there are several choice Maxims or Axioms of Faith by which a Believer sails, in and through the Blackest Storms and Tempests. Such as these,

I. *What ever the stone be that's thrown, 'tis the hand of Heaven flings it.* In all the evils we either fear or feel, faith looks beyond the Creature, and carries up the heart unto God. No evil in the City, no penal evil, either on me or mine, *but the* k *Lord hath done it.* Thus *David*, Dumb, *because thou didst it*, Psal. 39. 9. and *the Lord shall bid Shimei curse*, 2 Sam. 16. 10. *David* could read Gods hand at the foot of the Commission, though his Commanders could not. Thou couldest have no power against me, *unless I gives thee from above*, saith our Saviour to *Pilate.* And holy *Job* when plundred of all, saith not, The Lord gave, and the *Chaldeans* and *Sabeans* have taken away; the Lord enricht, but Satan hath rob'd me: No, but as if they all had been but Cyphers, and meer standers by, *The Lord gave, and the Lord only, or at least chiefly hath taken*, Job 1. 21. k Amos 3. 9. l Joh. 19. 11.

II. *Let the King of Heaven do his worst, yet even then, he can do no wrong.* This is a grand Maxim in the Rolls of Eternity. One of the Fundamental Laws of Heaven; and that because,

1. *God is the most Soveraign God, the Supreme Lord*, that knows no Law but his own Will, which is the highest and the most unerring rule of Righteousness, Gods hand is Gods only rule, and therefore what ever Line he draws, it must needs be right. Our God is a Law to himself, who only can write on his Imperial Edicts and proceedings *stat pro ratione voluntas.* God doth and may justly do whatsoever pleaseth him, *Dan.* 4. 35. and can most justly resolve the Reason of all his Actions into his own Will, that great Potter may do with his clay, what he pleaseth, and that without the least controul or contradiction, *Rom.* 9. 20, 21. On this account, Faith counts it wisdom, not to play the censorious Critick on Gods administrations, considering that he alone is Ἀνεύθυνος· ὑπεύθυνος. According to that of *Elihu*, Job. 33 12, 13. *God is greater than man, why dost thou strive against him, for he giveth not account of any of his matters.*

2. *God as he is most just in himself, so also he acts most justly to me* saith a *believer.* Faith justifies God in all his proceedings, *i. e.* subscribes and gives Testimony to the Righteousness of God, even in his sharpest Corrections. Thus *David*, I know O Lord *that thy Judgments are in right.* Thus the Church, when under the *Babylonish* Captivity, (the heaviest Judgment ever inflicted on any people) yet then humbly m Psal. 119. 75.

sits

n Lam. 5. 18. Neh. 9. 33. ſets our ſeal to Gods Juſtice. *The Lord is* n *Righteous, for I have rebelled againſt him.*

III. *'Tis not fit that poor, weak, ſhort-ſighted, ſinful creatures ſhould be their own Carvers.* If they ſhould, they would, like raſh children, cut either too much, or too little, or their own fingers. Well for us, o Pſal. 31. 15. that as our *o* Times, ſo our Conditions are not in our own, but in Gods hands. Not what I pleaſe, ſaith faith, but what my God pleaſeth. He knows beſt what's good for his people, and I know, had God granted my requeſts, and fulfilled my deſires, I had long ſince been undone. The cooling drink which I ſo paſſionately deſired in my burning *Paroxyſm*, would have added to my flame, and quickly diſpatcht me to the houſe of darkneſs. Hence it was, that the honeſt Shepherd, being askt, *what weather it ſhould be to day*, replied, *even what weather I pleaſe.* Not ſo, ſaith the other, *but what pleaſeth God.* Yea ſo, replies the Shepherd, *for what ever pleaſeth God, ſhall be ſure to pleaſe me.*

IV. *Better to want outward Comforts, than enjoy them without my Fathers good Will. Iſrael* had been better to have been without *Quails.* They had ſour ſauce to their ſweet meat; while the Fleſh was in their p Numb. 11. 20. mouths, the *p* Plague of God was in their noſtrils. *You will needs* have this, and that, and t'other thing, why, Take it, ſaith God, but then take my Curſe with it too: The Sack, but poiſon with it. You ſhall have it, but in wrath, See 1 *Sam.* 8 5, 6, 10, 11, 12. *Hoſ.* 13. 11. q Gen. 30 1. *Rachel* you will have children, or elſe you will take pet and *q* die. You ſhall have children, a *Benjamin* to your *Joſeph*, which yet ſhall prove a *Benoni.* His *Intrat* will prove your *Exit*! his life your death, Gen. 35. 18. Better were it for *David* to be without *Michol*, than that ſhe 1 Sam. 18. 21. ſhould, being enjoy'd, become a r *ſnare.*

V. *Seem it never ſo ill, yet it is really well.* On theſe two accounts.

1. *It cannot but be well with him, with whom God is.* 'Twas not ill with the three children, though in a fiery Furnace, ſo long as God was there, f Pſal. 23. 4. *Dan.* 3. 25. Suppoſe *David* walking in *ſ* the Suburbs of death and danger, yet not ill with him, becauſe God with him. When God ſays, *I will be with you*, as he has, *Iſa.* 43. 2. and I feel him, ſaith faith, it is infinitely more to me, than if he ſhould ſay, peace, health, credit, honour, plenty, ſhall be with thee. *God being with me, is all theſe, and infinitely more.* In theſe I could have but a particular good. In a ſingle God I have all good. Now God, who is with his people at all times, is moſt with them, and moſt ſweetly with them in the * worſt times. As their afflictions increaſe without, ſo do their conſolations within, 2 *Cor.* 1. 5. when the child is moſt ſick, there it is moſt dandled on the mothers knee: when it begins to faint,

* *Domitianus in Jovis ſinu.* Sueton.

faint, then is the Closet ransackt for the choicest Cordial. This blessed *Baynham* found, when at the stake he told the bloody *Papists*, O ye *Papists*, said he, you talk of Miracles, behold here a true one, *These flames are to me a bed of Roses*. God is wont to give Believers in such a time, their exceedings, their five messes. That part of the Army, which is upon Action in the field, and upon hard service, shall be sure to have their pay. What are all the promises, but vessels of Cordial wine, tunn'd on purpose against a groaning hour, when God usually and speedily broacheth them, *Psal.* 50. 15.

2. *All is well that ends well*, Now, saith Faith, all sad and gloomy dispensations have sweet ends, whether I respect God or my self.

I. *In respect of God*, And that,

1. *For the manifestation of his infinite Wisdom*. Who so contrives the passages of his Providence, as that one shall qualifie another. God knows, that should I always prosper, I should have been apt to swell and presume, and therefore he pricks my bladder, to let out that wind. Hast I been always fed with sweet meats, 'Tis very probable I might have surfited, and therefore he mingles my sweets with these tart ingredients. Were not this Base added to my Trebble, I should never have made any *Harmonious* Musick.

2. *For the declaration of his Almighty Power*. God many times brings his people into such a condition as not to know what to do, that *they may know now what the Lord can do*. Thus, *Deu.* 32. 36, 39. The *Lord shall judge his People, when he sees their power is gone*: and see now, *That I, even I am he, and there is no God with me*. Thus, *Psal.* 106. 8. *Nevertheless he saved them for his name sake*, but what Name? even that Glorious one of his Power, *that he might make his Power known*.

II. *In respect of Believers*. The life of every Saint is a *Tragæ comedy*, and the last Act of it crowns the whole *Play*. Mark the upright man, and behold the just; for *the* t *End of that man is peace*. Out of the Eater shall come meat. This affliction and that affliction, yea the whole series of them *shall work together for my Good*, Rom. 8. 28. *Saints Good is Gods aim*. As love is the principle he constantly acts from, so the Saints good is the end he propounds and aims at in All his dispensations. From this he never swerves. The fire of love never goes out of his Heart, nor the Saints good out of his Eye. When he frowns, chides, strikes, yet then his heart burns with love, and his thoughts are to do them good; *Jer.* 24. 5. — and 29. 11. *Deu.* 8. 2, 16. But what good? Much every way, chiefly with respect to their Corruptions, graces, services, glory.

t Psal. 37. 37.

1. *Saints*

1. *Saints Corruptions to purge and subdue them. This is all the fruit, the taking away of their sin*, Isa. 27. 9. Afflictions are Gods brine and pickle to preserve the Saints from putrifying. *Pauls* thorn in the flesh, was given him to prevent and mortifie Pride, 2 *Cor.* 12 7. All the harm which the fiery Furnace, did the young men in *Dan.* 3. 24. 25. was but to burn of their cords. Our lusts are cords, cords of vanity, fiery tryals sent on purpose to burn and consume them. *Adversity like* Winter-weather, of great use to kill weeds and vermin, which the Summer of prosperity is wont to breed. God is fain to rub hard many times to fetch out the dirt that is ingrain'd in our Nature. This Thunder serves to clear the Air from infectious Vapours. This bitter portion purges out ill humours. Be the Teeth of thy troubles never so many, never so sharp, 'tis but to file off thy Rust. This tempestuous tossing in the Sea, will more purge the Wine from its Lees. It clarifies the Soul. According to that, *Zech.* 14. 9. *I will bring a third part through the fire, to refine them as silver.*

2. *Saints Graces.* And that,

1. *For their Tryal and experience. That the trial of your Faith, &c.* 1 Pet. 1. 6. The fire tryes the Gold as well as the Touch-stone. Diseases not only need, but try the Art of the *Physician*, and Tempests the skill of the *Pilot*. The Saints sufferings are but as so many Touch-stones. Now, now shall the Saint clearly know, whether the Conscience be sound or foundred, if it will pace well in rough ways. Here, *here is the Faith*, i. e. *the Tryal of the Saints Faith and patience*,, Rev. 13. 10.

2. *For their Increase and Growth.* The snuffing of the Candle makes it burn the brighter. Hence it is that the Saints *glory in Tribulation*, Rom. 5. 5. because their sufferings add strength to their graces. Never are Gods spiritual Nightingales apt to sing more sweetly, than when the thorn is at their Breast. Saints are indeed made of precious metal, and yet they are too too apt to lose their edge. Hence it *is that* God by afflictions whets and sharpens them. He beats and bruises his links, to make them burne the brighter, loads his choicest Ships with sufficient *Ballast*, to make them sail the steadier: bruises his Spices to make them send out an *Aromatick* Savour, *Jer.* 22. 21. *Isa.* 26 10. *Heb.* 12. 10.

Object. *But I find not this precious benefit.*

Sol. Afflictions do not presently work, as least thou mayst not presently feel their operation. As Christ to *Peter*, what I doe, thou knowst not now, *John* 13. 7. *but thou shalt hereafter*: So afterward it brings forth the fruit of Righteousness, *Heb.* 12. 11.

3. *With*

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3. *With respect to Saints future services.* Great sufferings are many times sent to prepare Saints, for extraordinary Services. See it in *Joseph* and *Paul*; *Joseph* thrown into a pit, sold a slave into *Egypt*, there cast into a prison, by all fitted for a Palace, and to be a Nursing Father to the Church. God bestows more Chopping and Hewing on Corner-stones, because he intends, they shall not only support, but adorn the Building. God means to build high upon them, therefore lays his foundations very low: Intends to sell these Diamonds at an high rate, and thence it is, he spends so much time and Art in cutting them. u Gen 41, 40, 41.

4. *With respect to the furtherance of their future Glory.* Christ went from a Cross to Paradice, so do Christians. The Master was made *perfect through sufferings*, Heb. 2. 10. So are Saints his Servants. Though the Saints Cross cannot merit, yet it makes way for a Crown of Life, *Jam.* 1: 12. *Their light afflictions which are but for a moment, occasionally work for them, a far more excellent and eternal weight of Glory*, 2 Cor. 4. 17.

VI *Be it really ill, never so ill, yet it might well be worse.* Be the suffering what it will, yet whilst here, whilst above ground, 'tis far less than I have * deserved. Blessed be God, cryed out that * Man of God, when in the *Paroxism* of his Gout, this though sharp is not Hell, the worst that we can feel here is not the 100000 part of what we have deserved hereafter. *Every step on this side Hell is mercy*, saith a sensible Believer. God is gracious in his greatest severity, remembers mercy in the midst of Judgment. As 'tis said of *Ashur*; *his Shoes were Iron and Brass, yet he dipt his foot in Oyl*, Deut. 33. 24, 25. So God tempers his greatest severities with the Oyl of Mercy. Corrects but in measure, *Is.* 17. 6. nay in mercy, in infinite mercy. I that have deserved the blow of an Executioners Axe, am sent away only with a lash only of a Fathers Rod. God only lops off some luxuriant branches, when in Justice he might *cut up the Vine, both Root and Branch, and cast them into Everlasting flames.* * Ezr. 9. 13. * Mr. Whitaker.

VII. And lastly. *Be it now never so ill, it will certainly be* * *better.* Thus the *Psalmist* All thy waves are gone over me, *yet the Lord will command his loving kindness*, Psal. 42. 7, 8. Thus the Church, *Mic.* 7. 7, 8, 9. More particularly Faith concludes. x *Nemo desperet meliora Lapsus Sen, Trag.*

1. *My afflictions, though Lasting, will not be Everlasting.* Though the night be dark and long, yet there will come a day-break, and comfortable Dawn, my God will not always chide, *neither will he contend for ever*, Is. 57. 16 Rev. 2, 10.

2. *My greatest extremity of distress, is Gods fairest opportunity for*

Deliverance. When the *Caſſians* are moſt infeſted with Locuſts, then and not till then do the *Solencidian* Birds come in to their aſſiſtance. *Cauſ. Hier. l. 6. c.* 31. Now, *now will I ariſe ſaith the Lord*, Deut. 32. 36. *Cum duplicantur lateres, venit Moſes. In the Mount there will God be ſeen*, Gen. 22. 14.

3. And laſtly. * *Heaven will pay for all at laſt. Where every Tear ſhall be wiped off*, Rev. 21 4. The pleaſantneſs and ſecurity of the Port, will make more than full amends, for the danger and difficulty of the paſſage. And this is that wherein Faith triumphs, as knowing that he that for Chriſts ſake, in obedience to Chriſts Will, in conformity to Chriſts Word, in aiming at Chriſts Glory, wears the ſharpeſt Crown of Thorns here, ſhall by Chriſt have his Temples incircled with the faireſt Crown of Glory hereafter, As in this life an hundred fold, ſo in the *World to come*, *Life Eternal*, Mark 10. 30.

* *Superata Tellus Sydera donat* Boet. *Fœlix poſt fata. Ad delicias juvat ire periclis. Ex ὑδρὸς κλέος.*

How

How may we cure Diſtractions in holy Duties?

Matth. 15. 7, 8.

Ye Hypocrites, well did Iſaiah *propheſie of you, ſaying,*
This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth
me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.

IN this Chapter you will find a Conteſt between *Chriſt* and the *Phariſees*, about their Traditions and old Cuſtoms, which they valued above the Commandments of God, as it is uſual with formal men to love Chains of their own making, and to make Conſcience of a Tradition when yet they can diſpenſe with a Commandment, and thereby diſcovering themſelves to be very hypocrites, who are more in Externals than in Internals, in ſhew than ſubſtance, minding the formality rather than the ſpirit and life of Service to God; our Lord confirms his cenſure by the teſtimony of the Prophet *Iſaiah*, *Ye Hypocrites*, &c.

I ſhall not ſtand explaining the words [*Drawing nigh*] is a phraſe peculiar to Worſhip, eſpecially to Invocation, [*mouth* and *lips*] are put for all external Geſtures, and that bodily exerciſe which is neceſſary to the worſhip of God, eſpecially for words. [*But their heart is far from me*] it chiefly intendeth their habitual averſeneſs from God, but may alſo compriz; the wandring and roving of the mind in duty, which is a

degree and ſpeice of it, of that I ſhall treat at this time, and my Note will be:

That diſtraction of thoughts, or the removing of the heart from God in Worſhip, is a great ſin, and degree of hypocriſie.

The Text ſpeaketh of groſs hypocriſie or a zealous pretence of outward Worſhip without any ſerious bent of heart towards God; but any removal of the heart from him in times neceſſary to think of him is a degree of it; for though diſtractions in Worſhip are incident to the people of God, yet they are culpable, and do ſo far argue the relicks of hypocriſie in them. I ſhall ſhew,

1. The *greatneſs* of the ſin.
2. The *Cauſes*.
3. The *Remedies*.

Firſt, That there is ſuch a ſin, ſad experiences witneſſeth, vain thoughts intrude importunately upon the ſoul in every duty, in hearing the word we are not free, *Ezek.* 33.31. nor in ſinging, but chiefly they haunt us in Prayer, and of all kinds of prayer in mental Prayer, when our addreſſes to God are managed by thoughts alone, there we are more eaſily diſturbed, words bound the thoughts and the inconvenience of an interruption is more ſenſible, as occaſioning a pauſe in our ſpeech; and as in mental Prayer, ſo when we joyn with others, to keep time and pace with the words, unleſs the Lord quicken them to an extraordinary livelineſs, we find it very hard, but how great a ſin this is, is my firſt task to ſhew. I ſhall do it,

1. By three *general* conſiderations.
2. By ſpeaking *particularly* to the preſent caſe.

Firſt, *Generally*.

1. Conſider how *tender God is of his Worſhip*, *Lev.* 10.3. He hath ſaid, *That he will be ſanctified in all that draw nigh unto him*. To ſanctifie is to ſet apart from common uſe. Now God will be ſanctified, that is, not treated with as an ordinary perſon, but with ſpecial heedfulneſs of ſoul and affection becoming ſo great a Majeſty; when you think to put him off with any thing, you leſſen his excellency and greatneſs, and do not ſanctifie him, or glorifie him as God, and therefore God pleadeth his Majeſty when they would put a ſorry Sacrifice upon him, as if every thing were good enough for him. *Mal.* 1.14. *Curſed be the deceiver which hath in his flock a male, and voweth and ſacrificeth to the Lord a corrupt thing: for I am a great King, ſaith the Lord of hoſts*. To be ſlight in his ſervice argueth mean thoughts of God, *Eccl.* 5.2 *Be not raſh with thy mouth, nor haſty to utter any thing before God, for God is in Heaven, and*

and thou upon earth. We forget our distance, and by a bold prophaneness are too fellow-like and familiar with God, when we are not deeply serious and exact in what we do and say in his presence, but only babble over a few impertinent words without attention and affection: Certainly, God is very sensible of the wrong and contempt we put upon him, for he noteth all, *Heb.* 4. 13. *All things are naked and open to him with whom we have to do.* And he will not put it up, for he telleth us, *Exod.* 20. 8. *That he will not hold them guiltless that take his name in vain*; and he will be as good as his word: For the least disorders in Worship have been sorely punished, witness the *stroke from Heaven* upon *Aarons Sons*, *Lev.* 10. 2. The breach made upon *Uzzah*, 2 *Sam.* 6. 6. And the havock made of the *Bethshemites*, 1 *Sam.* 6. 19. The diseases that raged at *Corinth*, 1 *Cor.* 11. 30. And though judgments be not so rife and visible now upon our unhallowed approaches to God, yet he smiteth us with deadness where he doth not smite us with death, for a man is punished otherwise than a boy, and judgments are now spiritual which in the Infancy of the Church were temporal and bodily. Certainly, we have all cause to tremble when we come before the Lord.

2. *The more sincere any one is, the more he maketh conscience of his thoughts*, Is more observant of them, and more troubled about them, *Isa.* 55 7. *Let the unrighteous man forsake his thoughts*; then he beginneth to be serious, and to have a conscience indeed when his thoughts trouble him. So *David*, Ps. 119. 113. *I hate vain thoughts but thy Law do I love.* We think thoughts are free and subject to no tribunal, if there be any error in them, we think it is a very venial one, they betray us to no shame in the world, and therefore we let them go without dislike & remorse: But a child of God cannot pass over the matter so, he knoweth that thoughts are the immediate births of the soul, & do much discover the temper of it; that there Actions begin, and if *vain thoughts* be suffered to lodge in him, he will soon fall into further mischief, and therefore he considereth what he *thinketh*, as well as what he speaketh and *doth*; and if at all times, especially in Worship, where the workings of the inward man are of chief regard, and the acts of the outward only required, as a help to our *serving God in the Spirit*, *Phil.* 3. 3.

3. *Carelesness in Duties is the high way to Atheism*, For every forme and slight Prayer doth harden the heart, and make way for contempt of God; Men that have made bold with God in duty, and it succeeds well with them, their awe of God is lessened, and the lively sense of his Glory and Majesty abated, till it be quite lost; by degrees they outgrow all feelings and tenderness of conscience, every time you come to God

God slightly you lose ground by coming, till at length you look upon Worship as a meer Custome, or something done for fashions sake.

Secondly, *Particularly.* 1. It is an affront to God, and a kind of mockery; we wrong his *Omniscience*, as if he saw not the heart, and could not tell man his thought. It is Gods Essential glory in Worship to be acknowledged an *all-seeing Spirit*, and accordingly to be worshipped *in spirit and in truth*, *Joh.* 4. 24. Thoughts are as audible with him as words, therefore when you *prattle words*, & do not make conscience of *thoughts* you do not worship him *as a spirit*. We wrong his Majesty when we speak to him in Prayer and do not give heed to what we say; surely we are not to prattle like *Jayes*, or *Parrots*, words without affection and feeling, or to chatter like *Cranes*, or be like *Ephraim* whom the Prophet calls a *silly Dove without an heart*. A mean man taketh it ill when you have busines to talk with him about, and your minds are *elsewhere*; you would all judge it to be an affront to the Majesty of God if a man should send his *cloaths stuffed with straw*, or a *Puppet* dressed up instead of himself into the Assemblies of Gods people, and think this should supply his personal presence, yet our cloaths stuffed with straw, or an Image dressed up instead of us, such * *Michol* put into *Davids* bed, would be less offensive to God than our bodies without our Souls; the absence of the spirit is the absence of the more noble part: We pretend to speak to God, and do not hear our selves, nor can give any account of what we pray for; or rather let me give you *Chrysostom's* Comparison, A man would have been thought to have prophaned the *mysteries of the Levetical Worship*, if instead of * *sweet incense* he should put into the Censer *Sulphur* or *Brimstone*, or mingle the one with the other. Surely our Prayers should *be set forth as Incense*, *Psal.* 141. 2. And do not we affront God to his face, that mingle so many vain, sinful, proud, filthy, blasphemous thoughts? What is this but to *mingle Sulphur* with our *incense*? Again, when God speaketh to us, *and knocks* at the heart, and there is none within to hear him, is it not an affront to his Majesty? Put it in a temporal Case, if a great person should talk to us and we should neglect him, and entertain our selves with his servants, he would take it as a despight and contempt done to him. The Great God of heaven and earth doth often call you together to speak to you; Now if you think so slightly of his speeches as not to attend, but let your minds a drift to be carried hither and thither with every wave, where is that reverence you owe to him?

It is a wrong to his goodness, and the comforts of his holy presence, for in effect you say that you do not find that sweetness in God which you expect,

* 1 Sam. 19. 12, 13.

* *Chrys.* Hom. 74. in Mat.

expect, and therefore are weary of his company before your busines be over with him; it is said of the *Israelites* when they were going for *Canaan*, that in *their hearts they turned back again into Ægypt*, Acts 7.39. They had more mind to be in *Ægypt* than under *Moses* Government, and their thoughts ever ran upon the flesh pots and belly-cheer they enjoyed there; we are offended with their impatience and murmurings, and the affronts they put upon their Guides, and do not we even the same and worse in our careless manner of worshiping? When God hath brought us into his presence we do in effect say, *give us the world again*, this is better entertainment for our thoughts than God and holy things, if Christians would but interpret their actions, they would be ashamed of them; is any thing more worthy to be thought of than God? The *Israelites* hearts were upon *Ægypt* in the *wilderness*, and our hearts are upon the World, nay, every toy, even when we are at the throne of grace, and conversing with him who is the Center of our rest, and the *fountain of our blessedness*,

2. It grieveth the Spirit of God, he is grieved with our vain thoughts as well as our scandalous actions; other sins may shame us more, but these are a grief to the Spirit, because they are conceived in the heart; which is his presence Chamber, and place of special residence; and he is most grieved with these vain thoughts which haunt us in the time of our special addresses to God, because his peculiar operations are hindred, and the heart is set open to Gods adversary in Gods presence, and the World and Satan are suffered to interpose in the very time of the reign of grace, then when it should be *in solio*, in its royalty, commanding all our faculties to serve it, this is to *steal away the Soul from under Christs own arm*, as a Captain of a Garrison is troubled whom the enemies come to prey under the very walls, in the face of all his forces and strength: So certainly it is a grief to the spirit when our lusts have power to disturb us in holy duties, and the heart is taken up with unclean glances, and worldly thoughts, then when we present our selves before the Lord; God looks upon his peoples sins as aggravated because *committed in his own house*, Jer. 23. 11. *In my house I have found their wickedness*; What is this but to dare God to his very face? *Solomon* saith, * *A King sitting upon his throne scattereth away evil with his eyes.* They are bold men that dare break the Laws when a Magistrate is upon the Throne, and actually exercising judgment against offenders; so it argueth much impudence, that when we come to deal with God, as *sitting upon the Throne*, and observing & looking upon us, that we can yet lend our hearts to our lusts, and suffer every vain thought to divert us: There is more of modesty, though

* Prov. 20. 8.

though little of ſincerity in them that ſay to their luſts as *Abraham* to his Servants, * *Tarry here while I go yonder and Worſhip*, or as they ſay, the Serpent layeth aſide her poiſon when ſhe goeth to drink: When a man goeth to God he ſhould leave his luſts behind him, not for a while and with an intent to entertain them again, but for ever: However this argueth ſome reverence of God, and ſenſe of the weight of holy duties, but when we bring them along with us, it is a ſign we little mind the work we go about.

* Gen. 22. 5.

3. It is a ſpiritual diſeaſe, the ſoul hath its diſeaſes as well as the body; the unſteady roaving of the mind, or the diſturbance of vain and impertinent thoughts is one of thoſe diſeaſes, ſhall I call it a ſpiritual madneſs, or feaver, or ſhaking palſie, or all theſe? You know mad men make ſeveral relations, and rove from one thing to another, and are gone off from a Sentence ere they have well begun it; our thoughts are as ſlippery and inconſiſtent as their ſpeeches, therefore what is this but the frenzy of the ſoul? What mad Creatures would we ſeem to be if all our thoughts were patent, or an inviſible notary were lurking in our hearts to write them down? We run from Object to Object in a moment, and one thought looks like a meer ſtranger upon another, we wander and run thorough all the World in an inſtant; Oh, who can count the numberleſs operations and workings of our mind in one duty! what impertinent Excurſions have we from things good to lawful, from lawful to ſinful, from ordinarily ſinful to down-right blaſphemous, Should any one of us, after he hath been ſome time exerciſed in duty, go aſide and write down his thoughts, and the many interlinings of his own prayers, he would ſtand amazed at the madneſs and light diſcurrency of his own Imaginations.

Or ſhall I call it the feaveriſh diſtemper of them ſoul? *Ægri ſomnia* is a Proverb, in feavers men have a thouſand fancies and ſwimming toys in their dreams, and juſt ſo it is with our ſouls in Gods Worſhip: We bring that curſe upon us ſpiritually which corporally God threatned to bring upon the *Jews*, *I will ſcatter you to the end of the earth*. We ſcatter our thoughts hither and thither without any conſiſtency; the heartin regard of this roving madneſs is like a runnagate Servant, who when he hath left his Maſter, wandreth up and down, and knoweth not where to fix; or like thoſe that are full of diſtracting buſineſs, that cannot make a ſet meal, but take their diet by ſnatches.

4. It argueth the loſs and non-acceptance of our Prayers, you are in danger to loſe your Worſhip, at leaſt ſo much of it as you do not attend upon; and truly to a man that knows the value of that kind of traffick, this

this is a very great loss: You that are Tradesmen are troubled if you happen to be abroad when a good Customer cometh to deal with you: the Ordinances of God are the Market for your souls, if you had not been abroad, with *Esau*, you might have received the blessing, and gone away richly loaden from a Prayer, from the Word, and the Lords Supper, but you lose your advantages for want of attention. Allowed distractions turn your prayers into sin, and make them no Prayers; when the soul departeth from the body, it is no longer a Man but a Carkass: So when the thoughts are gone from Prayer, it is no longer a Prayer, the Essence of the duty is wanting. What is Prayer? ἀνάβασις νοῦ πρὸς θεόν, as *Damascene* defined it, *The lifting up of the heart to God*; *Many* have prayed *without words*, but never *any* prayed *without lifting up*, or *pouring out the heart*. If a man should kneel, and use a gesture of Worship and fall asleep, no doubt that man doth not pray: This is to sleep with the heart, and the words uttered are but like a dream, have but a sleight touch of reason in them, a meer drowsie unattentive devotion, the soul is asleep though the eyes be not closed, and the senses locked up. Can we expect that God should hear us and bless us because of our meer outward presence? We are ashamed of those that sleep at a duty, and this is as bad or worse, they may sleep out of natural infirmity, as weakness, age, sickness, &c. But this doth more directly proceed from some slightness or irreverence: Well then, with what face can we expect the fruit of that Prayer to which we have not attended? It is a great presumption to desire God to hear those requests, a great part whereof we have not heard our selves; if they be not worthy of our attention, they are far more unworthy of Gods. x *Cyprian* or *Rufinus*, or whoever was the Author of the Explication of the Lords Prayer in *Cyprians* Works, hath a notable passage to this purpose, *Quo modo te à Deo exaudiri postulas, cum te ipse non audias? Vis Deum esse memorem tui cum rogas, cum ipse tui memor non sis?* Thou art unmindful of thy self, thou dost not hear thy self, and how canst thou with reason desire the blessing and comfort of the duty which thou thoughtest not worthy thine own attention and regard. x *Cypr. de Orat. Dom.*

I would not willingly grate too hard upon a tender conscience, it is a question that is often propounded, *Whether wandring thoughts do altogether frustrate a duty, and make it of none effect?* And whether *in some case a vertual attention doth not suffice?* There is an *actual intention*, & a *vertual intention*; The *actual intention* is when a soul doth *distinctly* & *constantly* regard every thing that is said and done in a duty: And a *vertual intention* is, when we keep only a *disposition* and *purpose* to attend,

though many times we fail and are carried aſide; this *Aquinas* calleth *primam intentionem*, out of the Scripture we may call it, *the ſetting of the heart to ſeek the Lord*, 1 *Chron.* 22. 19. Now, what ſhall we ſay in this Caſe? On the one ſide, we muſt not be too ſtrict leſt we prejudice the comfort and expectation of Gods people; when did they ever manage a duty but they are guilty of ſome wandrings? It is much to keep up our hearts to the main and ſolid requeſts that are made to *God* in Prayer. But on the other ſide, we muſt not be too remiſs leſt we incourage indiligence and careleſs devotion: Briefly then, by way of anſwer, there is a threefold diſtraction in Prayer, *diſtractio invita, negligens, & voluntaria.*

1. There is *diſtractio invita*, an unwilling diſtraction, when the heart is ſeriouſly and ſolemnly ſet to ſeek God, and yet we are carried beſides our purpoſe; for it is impoſſible ſo to ſhut doors and windows but that ſome wind will get in; So to guard the heart as to *be wholly* free from vain thoughts, but they are not conſtant, frequent, allowed, but reſiſted, prayed againſt, ſtriven againſt, bewailed, and then they are not iniquities, but infirmities, which the Lord will pardon; he will gather up the broken parts of our Prayers, and in mercy *give us an* anſwer; I ſay, where this diſtraction is retracted with grief, *reſiſted with* care, as *Abraham drove away the fowls* when they came to pitch upon his *Sacrifice*, *Gen.* 15. 11. It is to be reckoned among the infirmities of the Saints, which do not hinder their Conſolation.

2. There is *diſtractio negligens, a negligent diſtraction.* When a man hath an intention to pray, and expreſs his deſires to God, but he prays carelefly, and doth not guard his thoughts, ſo that ſometimes *he wanders*, and ſometime recovers himſelf again, and then ſtrays again, and is in and out, off and on with God: as a *Spaniel* roveth up and *down*, and is ſtill croſſing the ways, ſometimes loſing the company he goes with, and then retiring to them again. I cannot ſay, this man prayeth not at all, or that God doth not hear him, but he will have little *comfort* in his Prayers; yea, if he be ſerious they will miniſter more matter of grief to him then comfort; and therefore he ought to be more earneſt and ſedulous in reſiſting this infirmity, that he may be aſſured of audience: Otherwiſe, if this heart be not affected with it in time, by degrees, all thoſe motions and diſpoſitions of heart that are neceſſary to prayer will be eaten out and loſt.

3. There is *diſtractio voluntaria, a voluntary diſtraction*; when men mind no more then the task or work wrought, and only go round in a track of accuſtomed duties, without conſidering with what heart they perform

perform them, this is such a *vanity of mind* as turneth the whole prayer *into sin.*

Secondly, The causes of this roving and impertinent intrusion of vain thoughts.

1. *Sathan* is one cause, who doth *Maxime insidiari orationibus* (as *Cassian* speaketh) lye in wait to hinder the Prayers of the Saints, when ever we *minister before the Lord*, he is at our *right hand ready to resist us*, *Zech.* 3.1. And therefore the Apostle *James*, when he biddeth us *draw nigh to God*, biddeth us also to *resist the devil*, *Jam.* 4. 7, 8. Implying thereby, That there is no *drawing nigh* to God without *resisting Sathan.* When a *Tale* is told, and you are going about the *Affairs of the World*, he doth not trouble you; for these things do not trouble him, or do any prejudice to his Kingdom: But when you are going to God, and that in a *warm*, *lively affectionate manner*, he will be sure to disturb you, seeking to abate the *edge of your affections* or *divert your minds*; Formal Prayers patterd over do him no harm, but when you seriously set your selves to call upon God, he saith within himself, This man will pray *for Gods Glory*, and then I am at a loss; for the *coming of Christs Kingdom*, and then mine goeth to wrack; *That Gods Will may be done upon earth as it is in heaven*, and that minds me of my *old fall*, and my business is to cross the Will of God; he will pray *for dayly bread*, and that strengtheneth dependance for *Pardon* and *Comfort*, and then I lose ground, for the devils are the * *Rulers of the darkness of this World*; He will pray to be kept *from sin* and *temptation*, and that is against me. Thus *Sathan* is *afraid* of the prayers of the Saints, he is concerned in *every request* you make to God, and therefore he will *hinder* or *cheat* you of your Prayers; if you will needs be praying, he will carry away your hearts. Now, much he can do if you be not watchful, he can *present Objects* to the senses which stir up thoughts, yea, pursue his *temptations*, and cast in one *fiery dart* after another, therefore we had need stand upon our guard.

* Eph. 6. 12.

2. The *natural levity of our Spirits*, man is a *restless creature* we have much a do to stay our hearts for any space of time in *one state*, much more in *holy things*, from which we are *naturally averse*, Rom. 7. 21. *When I would do good evil is present with me* τὸ κακὸν παράκειται Oh consider this natural feebleness of mind, whereby we are unable to keep long to any imployment, but are *light feathery* tossed up and down like a *dryed leaf* before the *wind*, or as an *empty vessel* upon the *waves*, 'tis so with us in most businesses, especially in those which are Sacred, the

Apoſtle biddeth us *pray without ceaſing*, and we cannot do it whileſt we pray, he is a ſtranger to God and his own heart, who finds it not daily, this is an incurable vanity, though we often repent of, yet 'tis not amended, a miſery that God would leave upon our natures, to humble us while we are in the World, and that we may long for Heaven; the Angels and bleſſed Spirits there are not troubled with theſe things, in Heaven there is no complaining of wandring thoughts, there God *is all in all* they that are there have but one Object to fill their underſtandings, one Object to give contentment to their deſires, their hearts cleave to God inſeparably by a perfect love, but here we are clothed with much fraility, and much work begets a multitude of thoughts in us, *Pſal.* 94. 11. *The Lord knows the thoughts of men that they are but vanity.* When we have ſummed up all the traverſes, reaſonings, and diſcourſes of the mind, we may write at the bottom this, as the total ſum, *here is nothing but vanity.*

3. Another cauſe is *practical Atheiſm*, weakneſs of ſenſe of things that are unſeen and lie *within the vail*, in the *World of ſpirits*; things that are *ſeen* have a *great force* upon us, *offer it now to the Governour*, ſaith the Prophet, *Mal.* 1.8. God is a far off, both from our ſight and apprehenſion, ſenſes bind attention: If you ſpeak to a man your thoughts are fixed; and you think of nothing elſe, but in ſpeaking to God you have not like attention becauſe you ſee him not, *Exod.* 32.1. *Make us gods to go before us*: Aye that we would have a *viſible God*, whom we may ſee and hear, but the true God being *a Spirit*, and an *inviſible Power*, all the ſervice that we do him, is a *ſpiritual* and more out of cuſtome than affection, in a ſlight perfunctory way.

4. *Strong and unmortified luſts*, which being rooted in us, and having the Soul at moſt command will trouble us, and diſtract us when we go about any duty; each man hath a mind, and can ſpend it unwearidly unto is inclined, either to *Covetouſneſs*, *Ambition* or *Senſuality*, for *where the treaſure is, there will the heart be*, Matth. 6.20. ſet but the *Covetous* man about the *World*, the *Voluptuous* man about his *pleaſures*, and the *Ambitious* man about his *honours* and *preferments*, and will they ſuffer their thoughts to be taken off? ſurely no; but ſet either of theſe about *holy things*, and preſently theſe luſts will be interpoſing, *Ezek.* 33.31. *their heart goeth after their Covetouſneſs*: the ſins to which a man is moſt addicted, will *ingroſs the thoughts*, ſo that this is one ſign by which a man may know his reigning ſin, that which interrupts him moſt in holy duties, for when all other luſts are kept out, Satan will be ſure to ſet the darling ſin a work to plead for him; if a man be addicted

dicted to the World so will his musings be; if to mirth and good chear and vain sports, his thoughts will be taken up about them, if to the inordinate love of women, his fancy will be rolling upon carnal beauty, and he will be firing his heart with unclean thoughts.

5. Want of love to God and holy things; men are loath to come into Gods presence for want of faith, and to keep there for want of love; love fixeth the thoughts, and dryeth up those swimming toyes and fancies that do distract us, we ponder and muse upon that in which we delight; were our natural hatred of God and of the means of Grace, changed into a perfect love, we should adhere to him without distraction, we see where men love strongly they are deaf and blind to all other objects, they can think and speak of no other thing, but because our love to God is weak, every vain occasion carrieth away our minds from him, you find this by daily experience, when your affections sing in an ordinance your thoughts are soon scattered, weariness maketh way for wandering, our hearts are first gone and then our minds; you complain you have not a fetled mind, the fault is, you have not a fetled love, for that would cause you to pause upon things without weariness, *Psal.* 1. 2. *His delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in that Law doth he meditate day and night,* Psal. 119. 97. *O how I love thy Law, it is my meditation all the day. Davids* mind would never run upon the word so much, if his heart were not there, thoughts are at the command and beck of love, whereso love biddeth them go they go, and where love biddeth them tarry, they tarry, the Saints first delight and then meditate.

6. Slightness and irreverence, or want of a sense of Gods presence, a careless spirit will surely wander, but one deeply affected is fixed and intent, *Jonah* when he prayed in the Whales belly, could he have an heart to forget his work? *Daniel* when he prayed among the Lions, could he mind any thing else? when we are serious and pray in good earnest, we will call in all our thoughts and hold them under command. This Question was put to *Basil*, how a man should keep the mind free from distraction, his Answer was, * γίγνεται ἀπαλλαγὴ διὰ τῆς ἀγάπης τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τοῦ πλησίον. That is, that this evil came from slightness of heart, and unbelief of Gods presence, *for if a man did believe that God were before his eyes, searching the heart, and trying the reins, he would be serious, all things are naked and open to him, with whom we have to do,* God looketh on, and so do the Angels, he looketh on the heart, and will not you be serious? *Scholars* that have a trewardly mind, yet the presence of their Masters forceth them to their Books, the Great God who telleth man his thought, he seeth, our desires and

* Basil in Regulis brevioribus.

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and thoughts ſpeak lowder in his ears than our words; therefore poſſeſs the heart with a *dread of his glorious preſence*, and with the weight and importance of the work we are about, were we to deal with another man in a caſe of life and death, we would weigh our words, and not rove like mad men.

7. The Curioſity of the Senſes theſe occaſion a diverſion, 'tis the Office of the fancy to preſent as in a Glaſs whatſoever is received by the External Senſes, or offered by the memory, and ſo the underſtanding taketh notice of it, the wandring eye cauſeth a wandring heart, *Solomon* ſaith, *Prov.* 17. 24. *The fools eyes are to the ends of the earth*, firſt his eyes rove, and then his heart, the Apoſtle *Peter* ſaith, of unclean perſons, that they have eyes full of adultery, 2 *Pet.* 2. 14. μοιχαλίδος of the adultereſs (as the word ſignifieth) the eye is rolled upon the object, and then the dart by the fancy is tranſmitted to the heart, Senſes are the windows and doors of the Soul, keep the Senſes if you would keep the heart; *Job* was at a ſevere appointment with his eyes, *Job.* 31. 1. 'tis good when we go to God to renew theſe *Covenants*, to agree with the heart that we will not go to God without it, with the eyes and ears, that we will not ſee and hear any thing but what concerns our work; 'twas a ſtrange conſtancy & fixedneſs which * *Joſephus* ſpeaketh of, when *Fauſtus*, *Cornelius*, and *Furius*, and *Fabius*, with their Troops had broken into the City of *Jeruſalem*, and ſome fled one way and ſome another, yet the Prieſts went on with their Sacrifices, and the holy rites of the Temple, as if they heard nothing, though they ruſhed on them with their ſwords, yet they preferred the duty of their Religion, before their own ſafety: and ſtrange is that other Inſtance of the *Spartan* Youth in *Plutarch*, that held the Cenſer to *Alexander* whilſt he was ſacrificing, and though a coal lighted upon his fleſh, he ſuffered it to burn there, rather than by any crying out he would diſturb the rites of their Heatheniſh Superſtition: certainly theſe inſtances ſhould ſhame us Chriſtians, that do not hold the Senſes under a more ſevere reſtraint, but upon every light occaſion ſuffer them to trouble and diſtract us in worſhip.

* *Joſephus de Bellis Judaorum.*

8. *Carking and diſtruſtful Cares*, when we are torn in pieces with the cares of the World, we cannot have a compoſed heart, but our *minds* will waver, and our dangers will recurr to our thoughts, and *hinder* the exerciſe of our faith, God took ſpecial care of the *Jews*, when they went up to worſhip, that they might have nothing to trouble them, and therefore he ſaith, *Exod.* 34. 24. *none of the nations ſhall deſire the Land when thou ſhalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice in the year*; and * *Auguſtine* gives the reaſon of it, leſt they ſhould be diſtracted with

* *Auguſtinus queſt.* 161. *in Exod.*

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with thoughts about their own preſervation, *vult Deus intelligi ut ſe-curus quiſq; aſcenderet, nec de terrâ ſuâ ſollicitus eſſet, Deo promit-tente cuſtodiam*, and one of the arguments by which *Paul* commendeth ſingle life, is freedom from the incumbrances of the World, *that we may ſerve the Lord without diſtraction*, 1 Cor. 7 35.

Thirdly, *Remedies*, I might ſpeak many things by way of meer coun-ſel about guarding the Senſes, the uſe and abuſe of a form, &c. but all theſe are but like external applications in Phyſick or topical medicines, as the binding of things to the wriſts of the hands, &c. which work no perfect cure of a diſeaſe, unleſs the diſtemper be purged away, therefore I ſhall ſpeak to thoſe things that are moſt effectual.

1. *Go to God and wait for the power of his Grace*, *David* ſpeaking of it as his work, *Pſal.* 86. 11. *Unite my heart to the fear of thy name*, fix it, gather it together ἑνωσον τὴν καρδίαν μου (ſaith the *Septuagint*) make it one, the heart is multiplied when 'tis diſtracted by ſeveral thoughts, God hath our hearts in his own hand, & when he can keep them up no longer then he holds them up, when he withdraws his grace we loſe our life, and ſeriouſneſs; as Meteors hang in the air as long as the heat of the Sun is great, but when the Sun is gone down, they fall; as long as the love of God and the work of his grace is powerful in us, we are kept in a lively heavenly frame, but as that abateth, the Soul ſwerveth and returneth to vanity and ſin. We read, *Acts* 16. 14, 15. that the *Lord opened the heart of Lydia, ſo that ſhe attended to the things that were ſpoken of Paul*: attention there beareth ſomewhat a larger ſenſe than we now conſider it in, namely a deep regard to the doctrine of life, yet this Senſe of fixedneſs of ſpirit cannot be excluded; go to God then, pray him to keep thy heart together, he that hath ſet bounds to the Sea, and can bind up the waves in a heap, and ſtop the Sun in its flight, certainly he can faſten and eſtabliſh thy heart and keep it from running out.

2. *Meditate on the greatneſs of him before whom we are*; 'tis of great conſequence in duties, to conſider whom we take to be our party, with *whom we have to do*, Heb. 4 13 in the Word God is the party that ſpeak-eth to us, *thou ſhalt be as my mouth*, Jer. 15. 16. *as if God ſpake by us*, 2 Cor. 5. 20. 'tis God ſpeaketh, and the heathen King of *Moab* ſhew-ed ſuch reverence, that when *Ehud* ſaid, *I have a meſſage to thee from God, he aroſe out of his ſeat*, Judg. 3. 20. ſo in Prayer you have to do with God, you do as really miniſter before him as the Angels that abide in his preſence, Oh, if you could ſee him that is inviſible, you would have more reverence. * A man that is praying or worſhiping ſhould behave himſelf as if *he were in Heaven immediately before God*, in the midſt of

* *Omnino nos oportet gratia, nis tempore cu-riam intrare cœleſtem.*

Illam, utique curiam in quâ rex regum sedet in stellato solio circumdante eum innumerabili & ineffabili beatorum spirituum exercitu, ubi & ipse qui viderit, quia majorem numerum non invenit, millia of all the blessed Angels, those *ten thousand times ten thousand that stand before God*; (h) with what reverence, with what fear should a poor worm creep into his presence; think then of that glorious all-seeing God, with whom thou canst converse in thoughts, as freely as with men in words; he knoweth all that is in thy heart, and seeth thee thorough and thorough, if you had spoken all those things you have thoughts upon, you would be odious to men, if all your blasphemy, uncleanness, worldly projects, were known to those that joyn with us, should we be able to hold up our heads for blushing? and doth not the Lord see all this? could we believe his inspection of the heart, there would be a greater awe upon us.

ait millium ministrabant ei, & decies centena millium assistebant ei, quanta ergo cum reverentiâ, quanto timore, quanta illuc humilitate accedere debet è palude sua procedens & repens ranuncula vilis, quam tremebundus, quam supplex, quam denique humilis & sollicitus, & toto intentus animo majestati gloriæ in præsentia Angelorum, in consilio justorum & congregatione assistere poterit vilis homuncio. Bernard. de quatuor modis ovandi.

3. *Mortifie those lusts that are apt to withdraw our minds*, he that indulgeth any one vile affection will never be able to pray aright, every duty will give you experience what corruption to resist, what thoughts are we haunted and pestred with when we come to God? God requireth Prayer that we may be weary of our lusts, and that the trouble that we find from them in holy exercises, may exasperate our Souls against them; we are angry with an importunate begger that will not be satisfied with any reasonable terms, but is always obtruding upon us, every experience in this kind should give us an advantage to free our *hearts* from this disturbance; the whole work of grace tendeth to prayer, and the great Exercise and Imployment of the Spiritual life is, *Watching unto Prayer*, Ephes. 6. 18. and that Prayer be not interrupted, 1 *Pet* 3. 2.

4. Before the duty there must be an actual preparation or a solemn discharge of all impediments, that we may not bring the World along with us; *put off thy Shoes off thy feet*, saith God to *Moses*, *for the place wherein thou standest is holy ground*, surely we should put off our carnal distractions when we go about holy duties. *Gird up the loins of your minds*, saith the Apostle *Peter*, 1 *Pet.* 1. 13. an allusion to long garments worn in that Country, 'tis dangerous to come to prayer with a loose heart. *My heart is fixed* (saith *David*) *O God my heart is fixed*, Psal 57. 7. that is, fitted, prepared, bended to Gods Worship, the Soul must be set, put into a dexterous ready posture. *Clauduntur contra adversarium portæ, & soli Deo patent, ne ullo se hostium Dei accedere vmquam ut asini possint.*

tiatur. Cyp. *lib. De Oratione Dominî.* There must be a reſolved ſhutting of the heart againſt Gods enemy, leſt he inſinuate with us, and withdraw our minds.

5. *Be ſevere to your purpoſe*, and ſee that you regard nothing but what the duty leadeth you unto, 'tis the Devils policy to cheat us of the preſent duty by an unſeaſonable interpoſition, Sathan beginneth with us in good things, that he may draw us to worſe, what is unſeaſonable is naught, watch againſt the firſt diverſion how plauſible ſoever, 'tis an intruding thought that breaketh a rank; in this caſe ſay as the Spouſe, *Cant.* 3. *I charge you that you awake not my Beloved till he pleaſe*; ſuch a rigid ſeverity ſhould you uſe againſt the ſtarting of the heart, if Sathan ſhould at firſt caſt in a thought of blaſphemy, that would make thee quake and ſhake, therefore he beginneth with plauſible thoughts, but be careful to obſerve the firſt ſtraglings, * yea be not diverted by thy very ſtrivings againſt diverſions, and therefore do not diſpute with ſuggeſtions but deſpiſe them: nor ſtand examining temptations but reject them, as blind *Bartimeus* regarded not the rebukes of the People, but cryed the more after Chriſt, or as Travellers do not ſtand beating back the Dogs that bark at them, but hold on their courſe; this is to be religiouſly obſtinate and ſevere to our purpoſe; Sathan contemned hath the leſs advantage againſt you, when he is writing images upon the fancy, do not vouchſafe to look upon them: A Cryer in the Court that is often commanding ſilence, diſturbeth the Court more than they that make the noiſe; So diſputing with our diſtractions increaſeth them, they are better are avoided by a ſevere contempt.

* *Eſt præterea optimum ad attendendum remedium ſi imagines rerum irritasse non ſolum non advertas, non excutias, non examines, ſed ita te habeas quaſi eas non aſpicere digneris: nam ipſum advertere, & examinare iſtas cogitationes evagari eſt: & jam adverſarius aliquid à nobis extorſit, &c.* Jacobus Alvarez.

6. Bring with you to every holy Service ſtrong ſpiritual affections, our thoughts would not be at ſuch a diſtance from our work if our affections were more ready and more earneſtly ſet; it is the unwilling Servant that is loath to ſtay long at his work, but is ſoon gone; could we bring our ſelves more delightfully to converſe with God, our hearts would hold our minds cloſe, and we would not ſtraggle ſo often as we do, therefore ſee you do this, or you do nothing *I was glad* (ſaith *David*) *when they ſaid unto me, come let us go into the houſe of the Lord*, *Pſ.* 122. 1. Were we of this frame of ſpirit many directions would not need. Now what ſhould hinder us from being thus affected? Are not the Ordinances of God the ſpecial means of our communion with him? And the throne of grace, the very porch of Heaven? Can we be better than in Gods Company, pleading with him for our ſouls good, and waiting for his bleſſing? Therefore let us be glad, and rejoyce in his preſence, and you will not eaſily find ſuch out ſtrayings of mind and thought.

7. *Remember the weight and conſequence of the duties of Religion*; that is a cure for ſlightneſs; you are dealing with God in *a Caſe of life and death*, and will you not be ſerious? With what *diligence* and *earneſtneſs* doth an *Advocate* plead with *a man* in a Caſe wherein *he himſelf* is not concerned, either for *the life* of another, or the *inheritance* or *goods* of another, *a* and wilt not thou plead earneſtly *with God*, when thy *ſoul is in danger*, when it is a Caſe of *Eternal life* and *death*, as all matters that paſs between God and us are? Certainly, if we did conſider the *weight of the buſineſs*, the heart would be freed from this *gariſh wantonneſs*; if *Chriſt* had taken thee aſide into the *Garden*, as he took *Peter*, *James* and *John*, and thou hadſt ſeen him *praying* and *trembling* under his Agonies, thou wouldſt have ſeen that it is *no light matter* to go to God in a caſe of the ſalvation of ſouls, though thou haſt never ſo *much aſſurance of the iſſue*, for ſo Chriſt had; the *frequent returns* of Chriſtian duties make us to forget the *conſequence of them*. In *hearing the Word* be ſerious, it is *your life*, Deut. 32. 46. *Harken unto the words of the Law, for this is not a vain thing, becauſe it is your life, thy everlaſting eſtate* is upon it, all, and the things that are ſpoken concern *your ſouls*, *every act* of communion with God, *every participation of his grace* hath an influence upon *Eternity*; ſay therefore as *Nehemiah* in another caſe, *Neh.* 6. 3. *I am doing a great work, I cannot come down*. Can you have an heart to mind other things when you are about ſo great a work as the ſaving of your ſouls?

8. Let every *experimental wandring make you more humble and careful*. If men did lay their *wandrings* to heart, and retract them, even *every glance* with a *ſigh*, the mind would not *ſo boldly*, *ſo conſtantly* digreſs and ſtep aſide, all actions diſpleaſing God are not done ſo readily, therefore it is good to bewail theſe diſtractions, do not count them *light things*; b *Caſſian* ſpeaking of theſe *wandring thoughts*, ſaith, The moſt that come to worſhip, being involved in *greater ſins*, ſcarce count *diſtraction of thoughts an evil*, and ſo the miſchief is *encreaſed* upon them. It is a *ſad thing* to be given up to a *vain mind*, and ſuch a *ſtocky ſpirit* as cannot be *ſenſible*; therefore if we do ſoundly *humble* our ſelves for *theſe offences*, and they did once become *our burden*, they would not be *our practice*. c One ſaith, that Huntſmen obſerve of *young dogs*, that if a *freſh game* come in view, they leave their *old ſcent*, but if *ſoundly beaten* off from it, they kindly take up their *firſt purſuit*; the application is eaſie, did we *rate our hearts* for this *vanity*, and pray againſt the ſins of our prayers with *deep ſorrow*, this evil would not be *ſo familiar* with us.

a Si cum ſublimi homine non dicam pro vita, & ſalute noſtra, ſed etiam pro alicujus lucri commodo ſuppliciter totam in eum mentis, & corporis aciem deſigentis, de natu ejus trepida expectatione pendemus non mediocriter formidantes, ne quid forte ineptum & incongruum verbum miſericordiam audientis avertat? quanto magis omnibus aculeorum omnium cogitatio pro immanitate pœnæ mortis periculo ſuppliciorum? Caſſian Col. 23. c. 7.

b Hæc omnia nonnullis qui ſunt craſſioribus vitiis involuti levia, atque à peccato pene aliena videntur, ſcientibus tamen perfectionis bonum etiam minimarum rerum multitudo gravisſima eſt. Caſſian Col. 23. cap. 7.

c Hooker on Acts 2. 37.

9. A *conſtant heavenlineſs* and *holineſs of heart*; if men were as they ſhould be, holy, ἐν πάσῃ ἀναστροφῇ, 1 *Pet.* 1.14. *In all manner of converſation*; in ſolemn duties, good and proper thoughts would be more natural and kindly to us; they that live in a conſtant communion with God, do not find it ſuch a tedious buſineſs to converſe with him, if they have any excurſion of thoughts it is in their daily work, and the offices of the common life, which they are ever ſeaſoning with ſome gracious meditations and ſhort ejaculations; When they are in duty they are where they would be; conſtant gravity and ſeriouſneſs is a great help to them; Men allow themſelves a lawleſs liberty in their ordinary converſations, and then in Prayer they know not how to gather up their hearts; ſuch as men are out of Prayer, ſuch they will be in Prayer; We cannot expect that pangs of devotion ſhould come upon us all of a ſudden, and that when we come reaking from the world, we ſhould preſently leap into a heavenly ſtame.

10. The next remedy is *frequent ſolemn meditation*; If the underſtanding were oftner taken up with the things of God, and our thoughts were kept in more frequent exerciſe, they would the better come to hand. There is a double advantage comes to us by *meditation*.

1. The ſoul gets more abundance of heart-warming knowledge, and therefore will not be ſo barren and dry, which certainly is a cauſe of wandring, Pſal. 45.1. *My heart inditeth a good matter, and then my tongue is as the pen of a ready Writer*; A man that boyleth and concocts truths in his heart hath a greater readineſs of words and affections, There is *a good treaſure within him*, *Mat.* 12.35. out of which he may *ſpend freely*, * one expreſſeth it thus: He that hath ſtore of gold and ſilver in his pocket, and but a few Braſs farthings, will more readily upon every draught come out with gold and ſilver than braſs farthings: So he that hath ſtocked his heart with holy thoughts will not find carnal muſings ſo rife and frequent. * *Cobbet of Prayer.*

2. *By uſe a man gets a greater command over himſelf*; When we conſtantly leave the thoughts at random, & never lay reſtraints upon them, it is in vain to think we ſhall keep them in order when we pleaſe, fierce Creatures are tame to thoſe that uſe to command them; every Art is difficult at firſt, as Writing, Singing, Playing upon an Inſtrument, but we get a facility by uſe and exerciſe: Yea, not only a facility, but a delight in them, and thoſe things that at firſt we thought impoſſible, by a little practice grow eaſie; Certainly, * *the way of the Lord is ſtrength to the upright*, and the more we ſet our ſelves to any good thing, the more readily and prepared are we for it. * Prov. 11.29.

How must we in all things give Thanks?

1 Thess. 5. 18.

In every thing give thanks, for this is the will of God concerning you.

THE more comprehensive any mercy or duty is, the greater they are.

There are three duties here together, which the Apostle exhorts to; all which have a kind of *Universality* annexed to them, of which my Text contains one.

1. *Rejoycing*: We must rejoyce evermore, for even holy mourning hath the seed of joy in it, which the soul finds by that time it's over, if not in it. Psal. 126. 6. Psal. 97. 21.

2. *Prayer*: Pray without ceasing; We must be ever, at least, *in a* holy disposition to this duty, when we do it not actually. "Prayer is the wall that compasses the City, there must be no gap in it. "It is as the Sun in the Firmament, it must always keep its round. Though not in the heretical sense of *Euchites* and *Messalians*. Chrys. *Orat.* 2. *de orando Deum.*

3. *Thanksgiving*: *In every thing give thanks*, &c.

Observe in the words these two parts:

1. A Duty enjoyned.
2. A Reason annexed.

I. In the Duty note four thing.

1. The matter of it, *thanksgiving*.
2. The object of it, implied, *God*.
3. The performers of it, *Believers*, for to them he writes, 1 *Thes.* 1. 1, 2, 3.

4. The

4. The extent of it in every thing.

II. In the Reason we have three things,

1. The ground of the duty, it is the will of God, the revealed will of God, the rule of all obedience.

2. The manner of declaring Gods will to us in this behalf, it is the will of God in Christ Jesus; it is a Gospel duty, Christ Jesus was the Prophet and Messenger of it, it's futable to the mind of Christ, it's accepted of God in Christ and for Christ: Lastly, Christ himself was a pattern of it, this is the will of God in Christ Jesus.

3. The specially application, This is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

Mr. *Calvin* doth excellently shew the sweet harmony between these three duties, how one helps the other, but I cannot insist on that.

The lesson then which the holy Ghost would have us learn in the Text, is thus sum'd up.

It is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning Christians, that in every thing they give thanks, that they be thankfull, as our word is more proper to our purpose.

For though we have nothing of our own that good is to give God but thanks, yet neither do we properly give him that, seeing both our giving and the right manner of doing it, even in thanksgiving is of the Lord.

Our continual praying shews that we are always beggars, and our continual thanksgiving shews us always debtors. Our thanks then indeed is the rebound of mercy heavenward whence it came, and a holy reflexion of the warm sun-beams of Gods benefits shining on us.

That which I principally aim at in the pursuance and pressing of this Truth, is, not only to speak somewhat to it in the nature, necessity and excellency of it; but to the extent of it as a special Case, *How Christians may be said to give thanks in every thing, and Why?*

1. Who are properly concerned in this duty. *Quere.*

2. Why, and upon what grounds are Christians bound to give thanks in every thing;

3. How, and in what manner are Christians to give thanks in every thing?

4. How in afflictions, and why:

5. How shall we bring our hearts to give thanks to God in every thing?

Who are, or ought to be thankfull? *Quere 1.*

The Lord hath a return and tribute of praise due to him from all Creatures *Ans.*

It is pleasing and acceptable unto God. *Beza in locum. Vel ista per antithypophoram dicta sunt.* Id. ibidem. *Illud autem non referendum non ad gratiarum tantum actionem, sed & ad preces.* Grot. *Annot. in locum. Comment. in* 1 Ep. *ad Thess.* *Doctr.*

1 Cor. 4. 7. 1 Chro. 29. 14. Philip. 2. 13.

Psal. 148. Creatures: *David* names animate and inanimate Creatures, and bids them sing Hallelujah; as if all the world were but one consort of musical Instruments tuned to Gods glory. But he looks for it principally from men and Angels. From all men.

Ἐπὶ τῷ δὲ ἀναπολογήτους εἶναι αὐτοὺς ἀνάπτερος λογήτους, Rom. 1. 20. 21. ἐμοὶ γὰρ δοκῶ τῷ θεῷ μᾶλλον εὐχάριστον καὶ ὑμῖν ἐγκωμιάζοντι τὸν σωτῆρα θεὸν ὑμνῳδεῖν ἢ θύειν αὐτῷ ἱερεῖα, &c.

It is charged as an inexcusable sin unanswerable of any Apology, upon natural men, that when they knew God they glorified him not as God, neither were thankfull.

Upon which place *Beza* brings in *Galen* a heathen man, praising and blessing God, not with sacrifices and sweet incense, but acknowledging and proclaiming the Wisdom, Power, and goodness of God, *&c.* I write this saith he, as a Hymn, and account it the true worship of that God.

Judg. 16. 24. 1 Sam. 31. 9. Dan. 5. 23.

The Law of Thankfulness is written upon the hearts of very heathens, as may be proved at large not only from Heathen Instances, but Scripture also; as the *Philistines*, when they had taken *Samson* and killed *Saul*; and *Belshazzar*, who *praised the gods of silver and gold, brass, iron, wood and stone*, &c. which although it be enough to shame unthankfull Christians, yet it signified little, for all wicked men though they have cause, yet they have no heart to this work, at least not often, not at all as it should be.

Some are so curious as to enquire whether reprobates in hell have not cause to give thanks that their torments are less than the merits of their sins, and for that the justice of God is glorified in the inflicting of them, but this is forrain to our case.

The persons engaged, and most bound to this duty are the *Thessalonians* that believed, and all the faithfull upon the same account.

Polanus: Now howbeit all the service we perform to God, both mediate and immediate worship, the duties of both Tables, yea and the whole work of our Christian obedience in a holy conversation, be but a return of thankfulness unto God, yet Thanksgiving in the Text and Doctrine, is taken more strictly for a *particular part of Gods worship* distinct from Prayer (of which he spake immediately before) which sometimes includes praise and thanks too, *By which we render due praise to God for all or any of his benefits promised or bestowed, and that with our hearts, lips and lives.*

Thankfulness described.

Fillucius out of *Aquin.* We *praise* God for all his perfections we *thank* God for his benefits.

Some affirm that much of Religion is seen in piety to parents, observance to our betters, and thankfulness to our benefactors. God is indeed all these to us. Yet the proper notion of our thankfulness refers to God as our benefactor, every benefit from God makes the receiver a debtor: thankfulness is rather the confessing of our debt than the

the payment of it; and for as much as we are bound always to be thankfull, it doth acknowledge we are always beholden to God, and always insolvent.

Now a child of God is bound to be thankfull to God above all men, because,

1. He is more competent } than any other.
2. He is more concerned }

1. More competent, by acts of reason and grace too. All that the Scripture speaks as to the duty of thankfulness, may be referred to these Heads:

1. To know and acknowledge the Lords mercies.
2. To remember them, *i. e.* to record and commemorate them.
3. To value and admire them.

To blaze and proclaim them.

In all which a gracious soul is much more competent than a meer natural man, though indued with quick understanding, strong memory, and great eloquence.

For the Spirit of God hath ridiculed his soul, and taught him this lesson; he is principled for it, he is a well tuned instrument; his heart boileth with good matter, and his *tongue is as the pen of a ready writer*, as *David* speaks on this occasion, when he spake of the praises of the King in his Song of Loves. Psal. 45. 1.

This Spirit of God in a thankfull soul, is as the breath of the Organ, without which the pipes make no sound; yea, as the breath of the Trumpeter by which the Trumpet gives a certain and melodious sound.

This is it that makes that noble Evangelical spirit, yea, that heavenly Angelical Spirit in Christians: See a place for it, *Be not drunk with wine wherein is excess, but be filled with the spirit, speaking to your selves in Psalms and Hymns, &c. giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ*: shewing that what wine doth in Poets and good fellows, it makes them sing and roar out Catches, by which they make Musick to the Devil; so the Spirit of God in Saints is the principle of all true thankfulness and holy joy towards God; and indeed there was a very gracious frame of spirit this way in Primitive Christians. Ephes. 5. 18, 19, 20.

II. More concerned, as having received more than others; *to whom much is given, of them much is required*; a proportion of duty according to the degree of every portion of mercy; whether you consider what is given, or what is forgiven you. Luk. 12. 48.

There are two things, which every gracious soul will acknowledge;

No

No man (ſaith he) in the world hath deſerved leſs of God than I, and none hath received more of God than I, how much then am I concerned to be thankfull?

I have read of a holy man, that was ſeen once ſtanding ſtill with tears in his eyes, and looking up to heaven, and being asked by one that paſſed by, why he did ſo, ſaid, I admire the Lords mercy to me that did not make me a Toad, that Vermine being then caſually at his feet.

The leaſt common mercy affects a gracious ſoul, that knows his deſert nothing but miſery. *Mephibosheth* bowed himſelf and ſaid, *What is thy ſervant that thou ſhouldſt look upon ſuch a dead dog as I am.* When *David* had told him he ſhould have his Lands, and eat bread at his Table. When the Lord ſpares our lives, and gives us common mercies, we muſt admire and adore his goodneſs.

2 Sam. 9. 8.

And this leads me to the ſecond general Queſtion.

Quere 2. Why, and upon what grounds Chriſtians are bound to give *thanks* in every thing?

Anſw. 1. *It is the will of God in Chriſt Jeſus,*

The will of God in Chriſt Jeſus is the cleareſt Rule, and the higheſt Obligation to any ſoul for the performance of any duty. O *that men would now adays ſtudy more, act by and hold faſt to this rule: And ask conſcience in the performance of every duty, is this the will of God in Chriſt Jeſus?*

It was meet that this duty of thankfulneſs ſhould be preſt and praſtiſed under the Goſpel, becauſe it argues a ſpiritual and noble frame of Soul, the higheſt pitch of grace, which is a true Goſpel frame.

David under the Old Teſtament had a new Teſtament *heart in this* particular; his Pſalms, which were all penn'd upon emergent occaſions, are all *Tehilla* and *Tephilla*, Prayer and Praiſe; his heart and Harp were ſo tuned to the Praiſes of God, to Pſalms of Degrees, to *Hallelujahs*, that ſome have thought the Lord is praiſed with thoſe Pſalms in Heaven.

Zach. 12 8. Greg Hom. 20. in Ezek. Yet is it promiſed under the Goſpel, that *he that is feeble ſhall be as David*; which ſome underſtand as to Praiſe and Thankſgivings, upon the account of Goſpel grace.

More punctually, *this is the will of God in Chriſt Jeſus; i. e.* Jeſus Chriſt ſhews us the duty of thankfulneſs both by pattern, & by Precept, for he was not only uſhered into the World with Songs of Thankſgiving by Angels, by *Zachary*, by *Mary*, by *Simeon*, by the Shepherds, &c. but the Lord Jeſus himſelf was a great Pattern and Preſident of thankfulneſs all his life long, and in this alſo was a true Son of *David*: He thank-

Luk. 1. 46, 68. Luk. 2. 13, 14, 20, 29.

thanked God frequently and fervently, *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the Wise and Prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes,* when his Disciples preached and cast out Devils. Matth. 11. 25.

Thus also when he raised *Lazarus, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.* Joh. 11 41.

When he was to eat common bread, he *blessed* it with *giving of thanks.* Much more, *consecrated* bread. Mark 8. 6. Luk. 22. 19.

Thus was he a Pattern of thankfulness, he did *in every thing give thanks.*

In like manner we find him reproving the nine Lepers for their unthankfulness, which shews that he held out thankfulness as a duty, personally he gave a Pattern and precept for it. Luk. 17. 16, 17.

Now though this were enough to shew it, the will of God in Christ Jesus, yet these words reach further; namely, to shew that is the strain of the Gospel in the Apostles Doctrine and Practice, for they through their Commission, and the great measure of Gods spirit in them declared the will of God in Christ Jesus; *They worshipped, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the Temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.* Luke 24. ult.

What the Apostle *Paul's* spirit was in this (by whom so much of the will of God in Christ Jesus is revealed and penned) I need not rehearse, for all his Epistles breath out the praises of Gods grace.

Thanks and Praise is the *homage* we owe to God for all we have and are, Therefore in every thing to be rendred. *Reas.* 2.

We live *precariously*, and at mercy; *by the grace of God we are what we are.* God in his sovereignty might have left us in the womb of nothing, and never made us, and have crusht us into nothing as soon as he made us, for *hath not the Potter power over his Clay?* Every moment we depend on him, and hold all from him, his power over us is arbitrary and infinite; to this Soveraign God we owe all, and therefore our thanks, *Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again, for of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever, Amen.* For not considering this *Belshazzar* smarted, *The God in whose hands thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways hast thou not glorified.* The birds that lift up their bills, at every drop they take, may mind us of this duty. Common and constant mercies deserve special thanks, because constant. Act. 17. 28. 1 Cor. 15. 10. Rom. 9. Rom. 11. 35, 36 Dan. 5. 23.

3. Christians must give thanks in every thing, because they have *spiritual* mercies innumerable and inestimable superadded to comon

mercies, ſpecial and ſpiritual mercies in Chriſt Jeſus, *Bleſſed be God*
Epheſ. 1. 3. *who hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly things in Chriſt.*
1 Pet. 1. 3, &c. *Bleſſed be God and the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which according*
to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again to a lively hope through the
2 Cor 1. 3. *Reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt, to an inheritance incorruptible, &c. Bleſſed*
be God the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Father of mercies, and the
God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation, &c.

Gratia gratis data, & gratia gratum faciens, Bellarm. Valentia, &c.

Papiſts diſtinguiſh grace into grace freely given, and grace that makes men grateful to God the giver of grace. this diſtinction is idle and untrue, for all grace as freely given obligeth us to be grateful, but yet ſpecial grace binds us to a more ſpecial gratitude, namely, ſanctifying and ſaving grace.

The *decreeing* and *ſending* of Jeſus Chriſt to and for poor ſinners, *the opening* a fountain of grace in and by him, *the making* and *ratifying a Covenant* of grace, whereof the Lord Jeſus is the *Angel* and *Mediator*, The precious *promiſes* both abſolute and conditional thereupon, with all other choice Goſpel Priviledges of grace and glory, as far as Gods all-ſufficiency, and the infinite merit, ſatisfaction, and righteouſneſs of the Son of God can reach, this deſerves a *ſuitable* proportion of thanks and bleſſing from us both here and in heaven. *Because thy loving kind-*
Pſal. 63. 3. *neſs is better than life, my lips ſhall praiſe thee.* i. e. I will render ſpecial
Meiofis. and continual praiſe for this above all other things.

Quere. 3. *How*, and in what *manner* Chriſtians are to give thanks in every thing.

Anſ. The difficulty lies here about the *Act* and the *Object* both, 1. That is, how a man can *always* have his *heart* and *tongue* exerciſed unto this duty.

2. If he could be ſuppoſed to do this, yet *it ſeems* that every thing is not a fit *ſubject* matter of Thankſgiving: For a great part of our life being *ſin* and miſery, which is rather the ground of *mourning* than of *thankſgiving*, our thankfulneſs ſeems to be confined to a narrower ſphear than what the Text holds out.

Firſt, Can a Child of God in any ſenſe give thanks for ſin? *Anſw.* No, not properly: Becauſe.

Ezek. 5. 11. 1. That which is the ground of *deteſtation* cannot be the ground of *thankſgiving*; but ſin is a deteſtable thing.

Gal. 3. 10. 2. That which produceth a *Curſe*, cannot properly cauſe *bleſſing*, but ſin is a curſed thing.

Rom. 6. 5. 3. As we may not *ſin that grace may abound*, nor do *evil that good may come of it*, ſo ſin cannot be the ground of thankſgiving, being con-

contrary to the *Honour*, *Image*, and *will* of God.

4. Sin is none of Gods Creatures, therefore a Plague and not a benefit, therefore the subject of sorrow and shame, not of thanks. *Deus non est author, sed ultor peccati.*

Nevertheless *improperly*, by *accident*, occasionally and consequentially (as men speak) sin is a ground of thanksgiving. *How?* That the Lord by his unlimitted power can so master sin, and by his infinitely wise providence can so permit, dispose of, and bound sin, and by his free grace pardon sin. You make grace superabound, where sin did abound, fetching light out of darkness, and make great sinners become great Saints, and from all lay a foundation, and raise a revenue of infinite glory to himself, this is praise-worthy in God.

Now as *Pilate* and *Herod*, *Judas* and *Jews* are not to be praised for their treachery and cruelty against *Christ*, although they did, by all they did, *fulfil & execute* Gods Decrees in that behalf, so no man must thank *sin*, or God for sin, albeit God hath extracted *Treacle* out of this *Viper*. Act. 4. 27, 28.

Wherefore when we read of a holy man that said, He was more beholding to his corruptions than to his gifts and graces, because the former made him humble, the latter made him proud. Or when we hear another cry out, *O felix culpa*, &c. Oh happy sin of our first Parents, happy Tree of Knowledge, that bore such fruit that brought forth such a Promise, such a Saviour, *&c.* I say, when we hear such *Rhetorical* strains as these from the Devout, Ancients or Moderns, we must understand them *warily*.

Yet when the Lord doth demonstrate the glory of his *Attributes* in *over-ruling* and *pardoning* sin, to the salvation of poor sinners, there is reason we should magnifie him to the height.

1. Because all the dishonour which God hath in the World is upon the account of sin.

2. Because we our selves having dishonoured him much that way, it is meet we adore and admire him the more in the power of his grace, that can fetch a *Pearl* out of this *dunghil*, and by such a *foil* set off his *glory*.

Let us then, as many as profess to be made partakers of this grace, speak good of the Lord for it, and give others occasion so to do, as the *Romans* did to *Paul*; *God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin: but ye have obeyed from the heart the Form of Doctrine which was delivered you*, *i. e.* That ye were once sinners and are now Saints. Rom. 6. 17.

2. Come we then from *Moral* evil to *Penal* evil; that is, if we may not give thanks *properly* for *sin*, without sin; whether may we give thanks for *crosses* and *calamities*.

Anſ. Here ſay ſome, we may not properly give thanks for penal evils, becauſe as ſuch they are the ſtroaks of Gods vindictive Juſtice, the fruit of ſin, and deſtructive to the creature; in which ſenſe they have not *rationem beneficii ſed ſupplicii*, they are not benefits but puniſhments.

But whereas the Lord hath ſo ordered that all things ſhall work together for good to them that are good, and croſſes, are ſome of thoſe things, they are hereby ſanctified and become the matter of thankſgiving to a child of God.

And this was that noble primitive frame of ſpirit among *Chriſtians*: under what providence ſoever, dark or light, ſweet or ſour, they were thankful in all; always thankful.

St. *Auguſtine* upon the 132 *Pſalm* commendeth that ancient cuſtome among Chriſtians, in whoſe mouths you ſhould always *hear* theſe words, *Deo gratias*, thanks be to God, when they *met and ſaluted* one another, *Deo gratias*, God be thanked, when they heard any tidings, of perſecution or protection, favour or frown, gain or loſs, croſs or comfort, ſtill *Deo gratias*, the Lord be thanked; at which cuſtome the *Circumcellians* pick quarrels, but St. *Auſtine* defends it as laudable and religious; what ſaith he, ſhall brethren in Chriſt not give God thanks when they ſee one another? *What better thing can we ſpeak, or think, or write, than this? God be thanked, nothing can be more compendiouſly ſpoken, nor more gladly heard, nor more ſolemnly underſtood, nor more profitably acted, than this, God be thanked.* Thus he, Such a frame of heart had hol*y Job, the Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh, bleſſed be the name of the Lord.*

Aug. Epiſt. 79. Quid melius & animo geramus, & ore promamus, & calamo exprimamus, quam Deo gratias? hoc nec dici brevius, nec audiri lætius, nec intelligi grandius, nec agi fructuoſius poteſt, Deo gratias.---

Pſal. 34. 1.

And ſuch a one was in the ſweet ſinger of *Iſrael*, *I will bleſs the Lord at all times.* -- Notable is that of *Chryſoſtome*; there is nothing (ſaith he) *nothing can we ſtudy more pleaſing to God, than to be thankful, not only in good days, but when things likewiſe fall out croſs*; this is the beſt Sacrifice and oblation we offer God; of a like ſpirit was famous Mr. *Bradford* Martyr, ſpeaking of *Queen Mary*, at whoſe cruel mercy he then lay. *If*, ſaid he, *ſhe will releaſe me, I will thank her, if ſhe will impriſon me I will thank her, if ſhe will burn me I will thank her*, &c. So ſaith a believing Soul, let God do with me what he will, I will be thankful.---

On Pſal. 115. ἐνδὲν γὰρ οὕτως τῷ Θεῷ ἀρέσει σπούδασον ὡς τὸ εὐχαριστὸς εἶναι. καὶ μὴ μόνον ἐν ταῖς εὐημερίαις ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν πραγμάτων ἐναντίως διακειμένων, &c. Hieron.

'This made one of the Ancients to ſay, it is peculiar to Chriſtians 'to give thanks in adverſity. To praiſe God for benefits, this *Jew* and '*Gentile*, can do; but to give God thanks in dangers according to the 'Apoſtles ſenſe, and in miſeries, and always to ſay bleſſed be God,

'this

'this is the highest pitch of Virtue; for a true Christians language is 'this, I cannot tell how I should suffer less, these things are but little 'to my sins, I deserve much more at the Lords hands, here is your 'Christian, such a one takes up his cross, and follows his Saviour: no 'loss or cross can dishearten him, but as the Poet saith, if the 'World break and fall about his ears, he would not be afraid. Thus 'St. *Hieron.*

By whom it should seem, that to give God thanks for crosses and afflictions is *non est vile* to be numbred among those singular things which Christians are bound to excel in beyond Heathens and Publicans, as to love enemies, to bless them that curse, &c. to which our Saviour exhorts and commands. Matth. 5.

Papists indeed tell us they are Counsels and Commands, and therefore required only of perfect ones in order to merit, and supererrogation, which is a blasphemous fancy; those duties, and so this of thankfulness, in every thing is required of every Christian, *virtute præcepti*, this is the will of God concerning you, saith my Text.

Why and how we do give thanks in and for afflictions. *Quere* 4.

I. We must give thanks for good, afflictions are not evil but good: Psal. 119. *David* tells you so, and wherein, which every child of God also finds. 67, 68, 71. To this agrees that of the Schooles, that crosses are not evil, but good. *Biel* & others.

1. Because inflicted by the Lord who is the chief good.

2. Because suffered by the Lord Jesus, who is the chief good.

3. They conform us to the Lord, who is the chief good.

4. They prepare us for communion with the Lord in Heaven, which is our chief good; therefore be thankful for crosses.

II. We must thank God for every token of his Fatherly love; but now crosses and troubles are such Fatherly love-tokens, *whom the Lord loveth he chastneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth*; therefore give thanks for them, as well for the rod, as for bread. Heb. 12. 6.

This is thank-worthy, this is acceptable to God, God will thank us for suffering patiently, therefore we must thank him for inflicting it as a tender father on beloved sons. 1 Pet. 2. 19, 20.

Would you be counted bastards? *Alexander* cashiered one of his name that would not fight; the *Eagle* is said to cast off those young ones that cannot bear the sight of the Sun; and some *Germans* counted such children spurious brats that could not swim: So our Heavenly Father will never own them for his children that will not submit to his rod, and kiss it too. *Lord when thou strokest and when thou strikest thou art alike a Father*, saith St. *Austin*. *Et cum blandiris pater es, & cum cædis pater es*, Aug. in Psal. 98.

III. The

III. The Lord by afflicting his People doth prevent sin, and purge it. Therefore give thanks for it, for this is good, because it frees us from the greatest evil.

2 Cor. 12. 7. 1. He prevents sin by it, *lest* (saith *Paul*) *I should be exalted above measure, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me.*

Isa. 27. *Ch yfoll:* 2. He purgeth sin by it, *by this* (saith the Prophet) *shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged.*

Now do we not thank and pay the *Chirurgeon* that lets our our bad blood, that launceth our festred sores, that cuts out our proud and rotten flesh? yes surely we do thank him; do we not also thank the Physician, that keeps us to a strict diet, confines us to our chamber, gives us bitter pils and potions, and crosses our appetites? yes we do thank him, for hereby he cures a disease, defends and preserves both our health and life.

Now what else I beseech you doth the Lord do more or less by all that we suffer at his hands, and doth not he deserve our thanks, as well as the Physician and Chirurgeon?

When we are vexed and pinched, then ought we more especially to give the Lord thanks, who as a most indulgent Father will not suffer our corruptions to spread further, but represses and corrects them by severe streaks and scourges: saith *Lactantius.*

Lib. 5. de just. cap. 23.

Prov. 23. 14. *Withhold not correction from the child, for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not dye: thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his Soul from Hell.* O blessed rod that can do this! Gods rod doth it surely. Then it's better to go to Gods house of correction, than to the place of torment; happy children then who have the Lord for their Father and for their Physician; this he takes for one of his eminent titles, the Lord thy Physician, Exod 15. 26. he doth it skilfully, easily, safely, quickly, thoroughly, according to all the properties of the best Artists, therefore, thank him

Βέλτιον Θεοῦ παιδεύεσθαι ἢ βασιλέως δίκης παιδεύεσθαι. Naz.

יהוה רפאך Exod. 15. 26. *Tuto, cito, & suave dolore.*

IV. We must thank the Lord for afflicting us, and for laying the cross upon us, because it is so far below what we deserve at his hands. What is a drop of wormwood sweetned, to the gall of bitterness? to the Lake of fire and Brimstone? hear what *Zophar* tells *Job: O that God would speak, and open his lips against thee, and that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are double to that which is! know therefore that God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth,*

Job 1. 5, 6.

The like saith holy *Ezra*; and then surely we have much more cause to say so; and is not this ground of thankfulness. If thou suffer

suffer a thousand evils; thou wilt never suffer what thou meritest, saith that Father.

Jesus Christ drank off the draggy part of the cup for us; we do but as it were sip for fashion, that we may seem to pledge, for to drink as he drank it we cannot, we need not, *Mat.* 20. 22.

Thank God then that thou hast so little a share of it, when all was thy portion by right and justice; this is thank-worthy.

V. We must give thanks in every thing, even in and for afflictions, under the rod and cross, because thereby the Lord doth discipline us, and learns us much which else we never would have learned.

By this *David* learned Gods Commandments, and they became dearer to him *than thousands of gold and silver*.

By this the Lord opens the ear to discipline, saith *Elihu*, even when men are *bound in fetters, and holden in cords of affliction: then he sheweth them their work, and their transgression that they have exceeded: he openeth also their ear to discipline*, and commandeth that they return from iniquity. For as wax unless it be heated and softned takes no impression of the Seal, so no man unless exercised with much affliction will receive the prints of divine wildom.

The word commonly used by the Holy Ghost in the New Testament for chastize, signifies properly to teach a child as a School-master or Father with a rod; this is Gods way of teaching, and the best Scholars in Christs Colledge have come by their learning this way, *it is good for a man that he bear the yoak in his youth*, by this the Poet saith, wise *Ulysses* was trained up. We use to say, they are usually the best Scholars that have bought their learning dearest. I am sure this is the choicest Saints *Academy*.

VI. Give thanks in and for afflictions, because hereby the Lord fits us for Heavenly glory.

Saints are called *vessels of mercy prepared unto glory*; but how do men make, and prepare vessels? if it be a vessel of earth, the Potter beats the clay to make it well tempered, then he moulds it on the wheel, then he bakes it in the oven, and then it's fit for use.

If it be a vessel of wood, it hath many a turn and many a cut, before it's fit.

If it be a vessel of gold or silver, it hath both heats and knocks before it be compleat.

So must every vessel of mercy be served before it be fit for glory; *we must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God*. Thus the Apostle *Peter* tells us also, *that the trial of our Faith being much more precious*

τὰν μύρια πάσης δεινὰ ἔδεσε πω τὸν ἀξίαν ἔδωκε δίκην: *Chrys. in Psal.* 41. 1.

Corde Gregorium, li. 2 *in* Ezek. *Hom.* 19.

Ps 119. 71, 72.

Job 36. 8, 9 10. The Cross teacheth more the way to heaven, than all the Doctors *Tertens.*

παιδεία. Heb. 12. Luke 23. 22.

Lam. 3. 27. *Multa tulit, fecitq; puer, sudavit, & alsit*

Rom. 9. 20. *Sub malleo premitur aurum tunsionibus, ut vas fabricetur magni precii: Sic veluti sub malleo sunt justi, premunturq; laboribus, ut fiant vasa magnæ gloriæ.* Gerhardus. Act. 14. 22.

precious

1 Pet. 1. 6, 7. *precious than gold, will be found to the praiſe and glory of God*; for the croſs is the whetſtone of Faith, and all other Grace, ſetting an edge and luſtre upon it; it is the awakening of the North-wind and South-wind, to make theſe ſpices flow:

Crux eſt cotica fidei Heron Cant. 4. 16.

Aug in Pſ. 26. The ſtone that is moſt hewed, cut, carved, and poliſhed is uſually ſet in the chiefeſt part of the building. So are ſuffering Saints prepared for the higheſt degrees of Glory.

For theſe are prepared the *aureola*, thoſe additional flowers and ornaments that all ſhall not partake of, ſay the Schools.

Rev. 20. 4. Thoſe only that were beheaded or ſlain for the witneſs *of Jeſus*, reigned with Chriſt a thouſand years. So that it may be ſaid of the

Pſal. 68. 13. Lords ſufferers, as *David* ſpeaks, *though ye have lyen among the pots, yet ſhall ye be as the wings of a Dove covered with ſilver, and her feathers with gold.* This may be truly ſaid, when the Lord ſhall *change our vile bodies, and faſhion them like to his glorious body.*

Gen. 48. 14. *Ut intelligeremus benedictionem non niſi per crucem haberi poſſe.* Tert. *de Bapt.* cap. 8. Notable and curious is that of *Tertullian* upon *Jacobs* bleſſing the two ſons of *Joſeph* with his hands a croſs (which is granted by all) *decuſſatis manibus*) that he might bleſs *Ephraim* the youngeſt with the bleſſing of the firſt born, that we might know no bleſſing comes to us more kindly and properly than by the croſs; therefore give thanks in and for thy afflictions

Oportet nos crucifigi cum crucifixo, ut glorificemur cum glorificato Macar. *hom.* 12. Phil. 3. 10. Rom. 8. 29. VII. It is a very high priviledge for a Chriſtian to be conformed to Chriſt, to be Conformiſts to Chriſt, is to be nonconformiſts to the World, *Rom.* 12. 2. but now what doth more conform us unto Chriſt than the Croſs? therefore give thanks for it. *That I may know the fellowſhip of his ſufferings, being made conformable to his death.* This is part of that excellent knowledge for which he accounted all other worldly priviledges but dung. To this conformity in afflictions unto Chriſt we are predeſtinated. This Priviledge appears in verſe 17. *If we ſuffer with him, we ſhall be glorified together.*

Luke 24. 26. This way Chriſt entred into glory. *Ought not Jeſus to have ſuffered theſe things, and ſo to have entred into glory?* now if we will enter with him, we muſt follow after him, how? by taking up his Croſs.

Chriſtus prius ipſe bibit potionem quam ſuis paravit. Bern. *parv. Serm. Luth. in* Exod. cap 15. Chriſt like a good Phyſitian firſt taſted the Medicine that he gave his Patient. The Croſs of Chriſt ſweetens our ſufferings in the bitterneſs of them: as that piece of wood ſweetned the waters of *Marah*, being caſt into them.

Rev. 1. 9. verſ. 3. Therefore *John* wrote to the Saints as partakers together of a great priviledge, when he ſaid, *Companion in tribulation, and in the Kingdom and patience of Jeſus Chriſt.*

Then

Then never hope to go another way than the Captain of our salvation hath led us, for if we baulk his track, we are lost; must we not then give thanks for affliction that conforms us to our head? *Aug.* in Ps. 52.

VIII. The Cross is a Christians banner, his honour, and the special favour of the Lord towards him, therefore be thankful for it.

Let not this seem a riddle or paradox, *I have you* (saith the Apostle) *in my heart, for as much as in my bonds and in the defence of the Gospel, ye are all partakers of my grace*; where by grace many understand, a special act of Gods favour to him and them, wherewith they were to account themselves highly graced. Phil. 1. 7.

Hence he saith again a little after, *to you it's given in the behalf of Christ not only to believe, but also to suffer for his sake.* This he accounts a peculiar gift of God to them, whereof but few in comparison do partake. Vers. 29. *utrumq; ostendit dei donum, quia utrumq; dicit esse donatum.* Aug. Valesquez *in locum.*

Hence saith one upon that place, it is a most noble, yea, and almost divine thing to suffer for the Lord Jesus.

For the Lord gave Christ himself on this very account *a name above every name.* Mark what the Apostle *Peter* saith, *If ye be reproached for the name of Christ happy, are you, for the Spirit of God & of glory resteth on you.* Phil 2. 1 Pet. 4. 14.

Which words must be *understood emphatically* the highest manifestation, and operation of the spirit of God. Gods Spirit manifesteth it self variously in several subjects, but in sufferers for Christ the very *Spirit and quintissence* of glory seems to be extracted and poured on thee, רוח The Spirit, *per* He *emphaticum.*

Upon all these accounts and many more such, we are to thank God for crosses, and corrections, because the good of them doth flow from Gods *goodness*, not from their *nature.*

When the Horseleech by the Physicians direction sucks our blood, and thereby performs a cure, the Horseleech is not to be thanked, but the Physician for his application. So the Lord can make the bloody persecutors of his people to be instruments of good to his people, no thanks to them but to him for it.

How shall a Christian bring his heart to this holy and heavenly frame, so as in every thing to give thanks? *Quere* 5.

Hearken to these few directions, and lay them up in your hearts, and draw them out in your constant practise. *Answ.*

I. *Pray earnestly for the Spirit of God*; without that Spirit thou canst never pray or praise God duly, because not spiritually; none can sanctifie the Lord God in his heart (which is the first Principle of this work) but he *whose* heart the Lord hath sanctified. *Canticum novum & vetus homo mistè cordis.* Aug.

The holy spirit breathing in a man, makes him a living Organ tuned to, and sounding out his praise.

Psal. 33. 1. *Praise is comely for the upright*, but as uncomely in a carnal mouth as a Jewel in a swines snout.

Non musica cordula sed cor, Non clamans sed amans cantat in aure dei. 1 Cor. 14 15. I will sing with the Spirit.

The pompous dresses and melodious quires of *magnificats* without the Spirit of God breathing among them, is but as *sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.*

For indeed without the Spirit of God in men, they neither can nor will remember the Lords mercies, nor consider them, nor value them, nor be affected with them, nor blaze the praise of them. *The dead* saith *David, do not praise thee*; dead hearts produce dead works, it is the spirit that quickens.

II. Labour to get *a continual quick sight and sense of sin*: this will make thee sensible of every mercy, and thankful for it. So the provocation, and merit of sin is nothing but curses, death and *wrath* being due to it, that yet they should be so tenderly spared, and instead of miseries should'st enjoy blessings, how should'st thou be affected with this, as *Mephibosheth* was with *David's* kindness to him; an humble broken heart is the most thankful heart, this was most eminent in the most eminent Saints, 1. *Jacob*, 2. *David*, 3. *Paul*, &c.

Gen. 32. 10. per Psalmos. 1 Tim. 1. 12, ad 17.

He that knows he hath forfeited all, knows he deserves nothing but the reward of that forfeiture, which is wrath; and he that deserves nothing, thanks God for every thing, even for the least drop, and crumb.

Quisquit at ad magna, qui grat anter accipit modica. Cassiod.

III. *Behold every mercy coming to thee in the stream of Christs blood, and through the Covenant of Grace*; this gives the mercy both an estimate and a relish; this doth both sanctifie it, *and sweeten it*, and sublimate it; a crust of brown bread coming thus, is better than a purse full of gold another way; as that Kings kiss to one friend, was said to be better gold, than a cup of gold which he gave another friend.

Animaimmersa sanguini Christi aurea redditur, ut manus in aurum liquefactum injecta deaurentur. Chrysost.

He sent *redemption to his people, he remembred his Covenant for ever, holy and reverend is his name.* The deliverance there was in *David's* account, and that truly the more thank-worthy, as being upon a covenant account, for thus every mercy is a token of the Lords favour to his favourite; it is that which makes common mercies to become special mercies.

Psal. 111. 9.

Non tam beneficium, sed ratio beneficii attendenda est.

Carnal men, so they enjoy mercies, they mind not which way they come in, so they can but have them; but a child of God knows that every thing that comes through Christs hands is the beter for it, and tastes the sweeter by far.

IV. *Look*

IV. *Look on thy mercies as answers to thy Prayers, and bless the Lord for them on that account*; for that's double mercy.

1. That God hath inclined and directed thine heart to beg such a mercy; for this is a special act of the Spirit of adoption, *Rom.* 8. 26, 27.

2. That he hath answer'd such Prayers, for this is a sign he accepts thee in Christ. Many blessings come in unasked for, and unlooked for: yet these require thankfulness.

But when the Lord is enquired of for the things we have, and doth grant them *to us*, this is a blessing, upon his own institution; and a seal to his promise; hear *David*, *Come near* (saith he) *and I will tell you what he hath done for my Soul, I cryed to the Lord and he was extolled with my tongue*; as if he had said, this was a signal favour for the Lord to grant what I petitioned him for, and therefore deserves a special acknowledgment. Ps. 66. 16, 17.

For this *Hannah* calls her son *Samuel*, i. e. asked of God; and *Leah* calleth her second son, *Simeon*, i. e. hearing, because God heard her Prayer for him. 1 Sam. 1. 20. Gen. 29. 33.

And *Rachel* called her son *Nepthali*, i. e. wrestling, because she wrestled for him; now as *Samuels* should be *Lemuels*, i. e. dedicated to God, so all our mercies we get by Prayer, should be the more solemnly dedicated to the Lord by thanksgiving, and such a frame of a thankful heart is a spiritual frame. Gen. 30. 8.

V. *When any of Gods dealings do either draw us, or drive us nearer to God, this is special mercy.* When we consider that well, we cannot but be greatly affected with it, and will be accordingly thankful for the mercy, or the dispensation is thereby the more merciful: mercies are drawing cords, afflictions are whipcords, to drive us; by both we are brought nearer to God, thank him.

If the chief Shepherd hunt us together, and keep us from straging, and bring us under command, this is a mercy to Christ's sheep. If the Lord *hedg up our ways with thorns* that we cannot find our lovers, this is a mercy. Hos. 2. 6, vers. 8, 9.

And if the Lord recover his mercies from us, that in the want of them we may know he was the Founder and Fountain of them, this is a mercy.

When *Absolom* burnt *Joab's* corn, it was to make *Joab* (who before that *kept off*) come to him. So all the angry dispensations of God towards his children are, that they return to him. Amos 4. 6, to v. 12.

That storm that sinks and splits some ships, drives, others faster into

the Haven. So do the troubles of this World make a true Christians voyage toward Heaven the speedier.

VI. *That Soul that is truely, and spiritually thankful, will so order his whole conversation, that God may have the glory of it.* This the Psalmist who was well skild in this Art, seems to point at often. *Who so offereth praise glorifieth me, and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the Salvation of God.*

Psal. 50. 23.

We cannot better glorifie God then by a well-ordered conversation, this is in every thing to give thanks indeed. So likewise in praising the Lord, *Hallelujah: O give thanks to the Lord for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever.* There is 1. The Doxology. 2. Invitation 3. The Reason, that we should, and why we should give thanks always.

Ps. 106. 1, 2, 3.

But who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord, who can shew forth all his praise, i.e. it is impossible for any man in the world to do this *great* duty aright, and as he should; *Blessed are they that keep judgment, that do righteousness at all times*; As if he had said, This indeed is a vast duty, but yet he makes the best essay towards it, that sets himself constantly to serve God and keep his Commandments

Now this no man can do neither perfectly, but *only by the merits* and in the strength of Christ, he making it the desire of his soul to serve the Lord is accepted, though endeavours fall short, and therefore is pronounced blessed.

James 1. 25.

For to be a doer of the work by evangelical obedience makes him blessed in his deed; labour then to bless the Lord, not only in words, but in deed, and you shall be blessed.

VII. If we would offer thanks to the Lord acceptably, *Let us do it in the name of the Lord Jesus.* Thus are we directed by the Spirit of God.

Ephes. 5. 20.

Per eundum est decursos beneficiorum & recursus.

1. Because all mercy comes to us by him.

2. Because nothing is accepted but in him.

3. Because it is one part of his priestly Office to receive the Prayers and Praises of the Saints in his golden Censer upon the golden Altar, with much Incense. *By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.* Alluding to that of the Prophet, who calls it, *The calves of our lips*; that through Christs Propitiatory Sacrifice our Eucharistical Sacrifices are accepted, and that we must offer these under the Gospel continually *jugiter*; Alluding to the daily Sacrifice, now this must needs sanctifie our service, because the *Altar sanctifies the Gift*, and therefore mention is made of a golden Altar in this case.

Rev. 8. 3, 4. Heb. 13. 19.

Hos. 14 2.

Jugo sacrificium.

Is

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It is the Will of God in Christ Jesus that in every thing we give thanks? Then this serves to condemn the horrid ingratitude of Christians. *Vsa.*

1. Those that in nothing will give thanks, at no time, for no mercy; these are swine that devour all that drops from the Tree of Gods bounty, and never looks up whence it cometh. These are worse than the *Oxe* and *Ass that know their Owners and Masters cribs.* These are meer Heathens, who thought, they *profess they know Gode yet do not glorifie him as God, nor are thankful.* These are like Buckets that run greedily down into a Well when they are empty with open mouth, but when they be full they turn their hinder part upon the Well that filled them. Thus do unthankful men call greedily for mercies, and when God hath filled them, they turn the back, and not the face. Isa. 1. *Perraro grati homines reperiuntur.* Cicero.

2. Another kind of unthankful men is that sort, who having received mercies from God, arrogate the honour of them to themselves.

Let *Papists* and *Pelagians*, old and new, who attribute more to free will than to grace, which the one makes the root of merits, the other gives the casting of the scale in mans conversion to it; let these see how by such Principles they can acquit themselves from the crime of Sacrilegious ingratitude, for they rob God of his glory: and then let them hear not me, but Saint *Austine* thundring against them, *O Lord, he that assumes the glory of any good he hath to himself, and ascribes it not to thee, that man is a thief, and a robber, and like the Devil, who robbeth thee of thy Glory* *Soliloq. cap. 15. Qui de bono suo, ô Domine, gloriam sibi quærit, & non tibi, hic fur est & latro, & similis diabolo, &c.*

Thus also they who attribute their Riches, Children, Honours, Victories, Health, Safety, Knowledge, *&c.* to their Wits, Labours, Merits, these are ingrateful robbers of God.

Thus they burnt incense to their Drag, and Yarn.

Thus *Nebuchadnezzar* gloried in the great *Babel* of his own building. Hab. 1. 15, 16. Dan. 4. 30.

Thus the *Assyrian* also ranted, and vaunted himself, as if by his own great Wisdom and Valour he had conquered the Nations. Isa. 10. 13, 14, 15.

But mark the end of these men: How the Lord took it, and how he dealt with them for it; He turned *Nebuchadnezzar* out to grise among the beasts; He kindled a fire in the *Assyrians* Forrest, and burnt it; He struck *Herod* that he was eaten up with worms, because he gave himself, and not God the glory. Act. 12. 23.

3. Another sort of unthankful ones there is, that seem to be very thankful, but it is only complementally, and with the lip. These are like Apes that eat up the Kernel, and leave God the shells; they care not to go to the cost of a heart, or a life thankfulness, they are cursed hypocrites; they

Mal. 1. 14. they put him off with the blind and the lame in Sacrifice, and never once give him the Male of their Flock. God will pay them in their own coyn; they are thankful in jeſt, and God will damn them *in* earneſt.

Lact. Inſtit c 3. *Non conſtare himini ratio pietatis poteſt, &c.* † *Materialiter per connotationem, & adhærentiam.*

That man (ſaith *Lactantius*) *cannot be a godly man that is unthankfull to his God.* * And *Aquinas* ſaith, *That unthankfulneſs hath in it the root and matter of all ſin:* For it denies or diſſembles the goodneſs of God, by which we live, move, and have our being; yea, and all our bleſſings, the thankful acknowledgement whereof is our *indiſpenſable* homage unto God.

Pſal. 139. Unthankfulneſs was a huge ingredient into *Adams* ſin: To ſin againſt his Maker as ſoon as he was made: Yea, by whom he was ſo fearfully and wonderfully made: little lower than the Angels.

Gen. 9. Gen. 19. Deut 32. Ezek. 16. *per totum.* Unthankfulneſs was the ſin of *Noah* and *Lot* after their deliverance, the one from water, the other from fire.

The ſins of *Iſrael*, that forgat their Rock, their husband that found them in *the waſte howling wilderneſs*, and when they *lay in their blood, no eye pitying them, caſt out to the loathing of their perſons.*

The ſin of *David*, 2 Sam. 12. 7, 8, 9.

The ſin of *Solomon*, 1 Kin. 11. 9.

The ſin of *Hezekiah*, 2 Chron. 31.

Peremptoria res eſt ingratitudo, hoſtis gratiæ, inimica ſalutis. Bern. *Serm.* 1. *de 7 miſer. Ingratitudo eſt, ventus urens, & exſiccans fontem gratiæ, fluenta miſericordiæ.* Idem.

The great ſin of the Goſpel is unthankfulneſs, by ſinning againſt the light, love, free grace, and rich patience of God in it; this *is to turn his grace into wantonneſs*; to prefer darkneſs before light, to *neglect ſo great ſalvation*, not to come under Chriſts wing when *he calls to us to deſpiſe his goodneſs and long-ſuffering, leading to repentance*, not to come *to him that we may have life*; to reſiſt his Spirit, and trample on his blood.

The ſin of the greateſt ſinners in the Book of God is unthankfulneſs.

The ſin of the Angels that kept not their firſt ſtation; The ſin of *Cain* in his offering; The ſin of the *Sodomites.*

Quouſq; ſe diffundit gratia, eò patet in gratitudo. The ſin of the Old World; the ſin of *Saul*; the ſin of *Jeroboam* the ſon of *Nebat*; the ſin of *Nabal*; the ſin of *Haman*; the ſin of *Judas*; the ſin of *Julian*; And of Antichriſt, all is unthankfulneſs.

Exhort. I ſhall conclude with a ſolemn exhortation to all that hear this word, and profeſs the Lord Jeſus, and to be ruled by the Will of God in Chriſt Jeſus revealed, that they ſtudy and practice this great, this comprehenſive duty of thankfulneſs, conſider, that no People in the World have

have such cause of thankfulness as Christians: They have received more mercy than any, therefore there is the more of them required, therefore the Lord takes their unkindness the more unkindly. Sins against mercy will turn mercy into cruelty, and patience into fury. *Crescentibus donis crescunt dos norum ratione.* Deut. 32. 6.

To be unthankful to a bountiful God, is for a froward child to beat his mothers breasts that gave him suck, and to kick his Fathers bowels.

The Lord, that he might upbraid his peoples ingratitude, compares them to a Bullock that was fatted in good pasture, and then kicked, *Deut.* 32. 15, to *Vers.* 25. And what this cost you may read there.

When the Lord would preserve in his People the memorial of his mercies see how he orders them: Every man was to come with a basket of fruits, and the Priest was to take it, and set it down before the Lord, and he that brought it was to make a solemn confession of his own poverty and wretchedness, of Gods goodness and faithfulness to him, and of his engagements to the Lord for the same; Hereby the Lord let them know that they had all from him, and held all at mercy, and this was their homage that they paid him. Oh, what shall we then render to the Lord for all his benefits? *who were Syrians ready to perish, who with our staff past this Jordan,* and now are two bands; who have not only neither springs, but upper also, the Lord hath opened a fountain and a treasure for us. Deut. 26. 1, to 10.

Think of this all you *Male-contents* and murmurers, read over your mercies, preserve a Catalogue of them, compare them with what others enjoy. It is not with you as with Heathens, you have the Gospel, if it totters, as if it were in a moving posture from you, thank your unthankfulness for it.

You have had it with peace and plenty, and if that hath glutted you, and the Lord is now curing your surfeit by a sparer diet, thank your wantonness for it.

Yet consider *Turks* and *Tartars* are not in your bowels, burning your houses, ravishing wives and daughters, killing old, sick, and infants, carrying away the rest Captives, drinking healths in your dead Nobles skulls digged out of their graves, yet all this is done among the poor Protestants in *Transilvania*, Sword, Famine, and Pestilence making havock in that flourishing Country, not to speak of other places, what is felt or feared; is not this ground of thanks?

Consider yet again, what we have had long, and still have, *though the Land is full of sin from one end to the other.* What we have deserved, and yet do, even to be stripped naked of all life and liberty, peace and plenty, to have our doors shut up, our lights put out, our Teachers all driven into

[illegible]

[illegible]

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How may we get rid of Spiritual Sloth, and know when our activity in duty is from the Spirit of God?

Pſal. 119. 37. part ult.

Quicken me in thy way.

THis Pſalm ſhines and ſhews it ſelf among the reſt — *Sicut inter ignes Luna minores.* A Star in the firmament of the Pſalms, of the firſt and greateſt magnitude; this will readily appear if you conſider either.

I. The manner it is compoſed in, or

II. The matter it is compoſed of.

I. The manner it is compoſed in is very elegant.

2. The matter it is compoſed of is very excellent.

I. The manner it is compoſed in is very elegant, full of art, rule, method, Theological matter in a Logical manner, a Spiritual Alphabet framed and formed according to the *Hebrew* Alphabet.

II. The matter it is compoſed of is very excellent, full of rare ſublimities, deep myſteries, gracious activities, yea glorious extaſies. The Pſalm is made up of three things.

1. Prayers. 2. Praiſes. 3. Proteſtations.

1. Prayers to God. 2. Praiſes of God. 3. Proteſtations unto God.

My Text belongs unto the firſt, and may fitly be ſtiled *David's* Litany; where you have.

1. His *Libera Domine, Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity.*

2. His *Vivifica me Domine, Quicken me in thy way.*

In this, theſe three parts are conſiderable.

1. The Act, *Quicken.* 2. The Subject, *Me.* 3. The Object, *thy way.*

In the profecution of which Scripture I ſhall do theſe three things.

1. Explicate the Terms. 2. Deduce a Corollary. 3. Reſolve the Caſes.

I. For explication. *Quicken.* There is a two-fold quickening.

1. Proper and moral. 2. Improper and metaphorical.

1. Proper and moral, which is two-fold. 1. Total. 2. Partial.

1. Total. Which is the raiſing a dead body to natural life; thus was *Lazarus* raiſed, *John* 11. 43, 44. So was *Drithelme* of *Northumberland* raiſed if credit may be given to *Bede* * and *Herus Armenevus*.

Hiſt. Ang. l. 5. cap 13.

* *Plato, lib. 10. de Rep. Ferrarius, l. 7. Reip. fol. 162.*

2. Partial which is the reſtoring a body declined and decayed with ſickneſs, or ſorrow to Spirits and vigorous energies. So was *David*, whoſe body by grief and ſorrow was made a meer Skeleton, *Pſal.* 31. 10 17. *Hezekiah* by ſickneſs brought ſo low, that he was become ſpiritleſs, yet he was raiſed up again, upon which he compoſes that rare Hymne or Canticle of praiſe to God, *Iſai.* 38. 10.

II. Improper and metaphorical, which is likewiſe two-fold.

1. Total. 2. Gradual.

1. Total, which is the raiſing of a Soul ſtark dead in ſin to Spiritual Life, *Epheſ.* 1 2. *and you hath he quickned, who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins.*

II. Gradual, which is the raiſing of a dull and drouſie Soul from ſloth and ſluggiſhneſs to high, yea higheſt degrees of vivacity, and activity; for this you have *David* praying here, and in *Pſal.* 143. 11. *Quicken me, O Lord, for thy Names ſake.* In this deſcription it will be very neceſſary to explain ſloth, and activity.

1. Spiritual Sloth is three-fold.

1. Reſolving Sloth. 2. Delaying Sloth. 3. Diſturbing Sloth.

1. Reſolving Sloth, is, when a Soul is ſetled upon it's lees, and reſolves to lie ſtill, and never to ſtir in that momentous concernment of its own eternal Salvation. *Solomon* excellently deciphers this, *Prov.* 26. 14. *As the door turns upon his hinges, ſo doth the ſluggard upon his bed*, as the door turns upon the hinges, and never ſtirs from his place, ſo the ſlothful turns upon the bed of ſecurity, and never turns from his purpoſe. *Jer.* 44. 16, 17. they were reſolved to worſhip the Queen of Heaven, come life, come death. Such was the Souldiers reſolution, who had on his Target God and the Devil pictured, under God *ſi tu nos vis, ſub the Devil ſe regimus.*

Ruffat.

2. Delaying Sloth, when a perſon doth inſtead to look after Soul-concernments, but not yet, they will borrow a day, a little time. Much like that ſluggard, Prov. 6, 10. *Yet a little ſleep, a little ſlumber, a little folding*

folding of the hands to sleep. When the sluggard is call'd to arise in the morning, he resolves to do it, only intreats one little, one short nap more, and then he will arise. So when some are called to awaken, arise and walk with God in his way in the morning of their age, they crave one short nap more first, and then they will do it; give them leave to get such an estate, to obtain such an honour, to match such a child, to satisfie such a lust, and then will they be for God. Such a sluggard was *Austin*, a little longer, O Lord, a little longer, presently, presently. *Matth.*25. 10. the five foolish Virgins resolved to have oyl in their lamps and vessels, only they would take a nod. Oh how dangerous is delaying Sloth? The Virgins deferring, provokes Christ to denying. *Archias* being merry at supper, had a letter sent him that concern'd his life, and though desired to read it, puts it up into his pocket, saying, *ὁσ' ἐυδοὺ τὰ σπουδῆ.* I'll mind serious things to-morrow, but he lived not unto the morrow, to mind those serious things. Such another sluggard was the rich man, *Luke* 12.20. *Stulte hac nocte. Tolle moras: semper nocuit differre paratis. Alexander* being asked how he came to conquer the World, replied, *Nunquam differre volens*; if you will overcome more than *Alexander* did, not only the World, but also Sathan, and your own flesh, the worst and strongest enemy of all, you must carefully lay hold on every lock of opportunity, and expeditiously improve the same.

Paululum, paululum, modo & modo, & hoc erat sine modo. Aug. *lib. confes.* 8. *cap.* 5. Plutarch *in Moral.* *Lucan.*

3. Disturbing Sloth is, when a person doth intend and endeavour to walk in Gods way, but Sloth as rust hinders the wheels of his Soul from coming to, and running in the way of God. The *Torpedo* if it touch but any part of the angle that a man holds in his hand, *corpus torpescere facit*, it benums and stupifies all the members that they cannot stir or strive. Such malignant influence hath Sloth upon the Soul; the chariots of Saints Souls should drive as *Jehu's* heartily and furiously, 2 *Kings* 9.20 and not as *Pharaoh's* chariots heavily and faintly, *Exod.* 14.25 all the agility of the Soul, and all the ability of the body are required in Gods way, and about Gods work, whatsoever comes short of this is Sloth, as whatsoever comes short of Virtue is Vice.

Plin. *nat. hist. lib.* 32. *cap.* 1.

2. Activity in duty is a victorious conquest over the Great *Goliah* Sloth, and riding triumph in the way, work, and worship of God; activity is a *David's* dancing before the Ark with all his might; there are three things which concur and contribute to complete this activity in duty.

1. *Tota animi intentio.*
2. *Inexplebilis cupiditas agendi.*

Bas *in reg. Brev. resp.* a 59.

3. *Assiduitas in actione.*

1. A streining and stretching of the soul to the utmost peg, and highest pin, a putting of it upon the tenter-hooks in service.

2. An unsatiable and unsatisfiable desire or longing for the effecting and accomplishing of a duty.

3. A constant and continual waiting and working until the duty be perfected; take these three exactly shadowed out in *Archimedes*; * he was drawing his Mathematical lines when *Marcellus* entred the gates of *Syracuse*, yea when the Souldiers entred his Study, that he never minded them, there was the intention of his mind; when the Souldiers pull'd him by the sleeve, he cries out, let me alone to finish my Scheme; there was his inexpleble desire of perfecting it; when the Souldiers drew their swords to run him thorow, he yet plyed his business; there was his assiduity in his action; here was *Hoc age* indeed. Oh what a shame would it be for us Christians, if a Heathen in his way should outgo, and out do us in Gods way. Stupendious was the activity of the *Jewish* Priests about their Sacrifices when their enemies were broke in upon them. I shall commend two Texts of Scripture to you, which do most lively obumbrate tepedity, and fervidity, *Rom.* 12. 11, 12. *Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.* τῇ σπουδῇ μὴ ὀκνηροὶ. *In festinatione non lenti*, here *festina lente* is out of doors. We must fly as upon the wings of the wind; our heart must be like the *Primum Mobile* to wheel and whirl us about with a most rapid motion; fervent in spirit, boyling or burning hot, all on fire and flame, serving the Lord, continuing instant in Prayer, strenuously and stedfastly wrastling with God, as *Jacob* did, who as a *Prince* had power with God, *Hos.* 12. 3. this is that *Ulcimum virium* which is expected, and only respected of God; God accounts nothing else Prayer but this, *Isa.* 64. 7. *And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee*, i. e. with that Faith and fortitude to hold Gods hands, as *Moses*, *Jacob*, and others did; the Cock is a rare Emblem of this activity, who raises, and rowses himself, claps his wings, and then crows with all his might, *Heb.* 6. 11, 12. *We desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence*, vers. 12. *That you be not slothful*, not of a slow pace, to want fire, yea and feet too, that not run in Gods way. *Non amo nimium diligentes* was the saying of a Heathen; but God will never say so, because we can never be too diligent and devout in his service; and surely if *Jacob* did serve *Laban toto conatu*, Gen. 31. 6. *with all my power have I served your Father*, then much more should we with all our industry and endeavour serve our Father.

* Plutarch in vit. ejus.

Joseph. de. bel. Jud.

ὁσὸς περιῶν- τας assidue operam navantes.

Ex fide & fiducia, ut Dei manus teneat. A Lap. in Loc.

volens. ex vi & Sim. non curo. Segnis, quasi sine ignis.

Thy

Thy way; by way of Emphasis, in opposition to and exaltation of, above all other ways,

There is a fourfold way.

1. *Via Mundi*, the way of the World, and that is *spinosa*, thorny;
2. *Via Carnis*, the way of the Flesh, and that is *insidiosa*, treacherous;
3. *Via Satanæ*, the way of the Devil, and that is *tenebricosa*, darksome.
4. *Via Domini*, the way of God, and that is *gratiosa*, gracious.

This way is two fold.

1. *Via velata*, a concealed way, and that is of his Privy Counsels.
2. *Via revelata*, a revealed way, and that is of his publick Commands.

1. *Via beneplaciti*, of his Privy Counsels, *Rom.* 11. 33. *How unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out?* He that shall go about to seek and search for that way, must return a *Non est inventa*, and shall prove himself a true *Ignoramus*, vers. 34. *For who hath known the mind of the Lord? And who hath been his Counsellor?* the best of mortals were never honoured with that title, to be one of Gods Privy Councellors.

2. *Via signi*, of his publick and common road of Commandments, Psa. 119. 1. *Blessed are the undefiled in the way: Who walk in the way of the Lord.* v. 27. *Make me to understand the way of thy Precepts*, Isa. 2. 3. *He will teach Sions Scholars of his ways, and they will walk in his paths*, Isa. 30. 21. *Thine ears shall hear a voice behind thee, saying, this is the way, walk ye in it.*

We must not be so impudent as to desire to walk in the way of his Privy Councils, nor so imprudent as not to walk in the ways of his publick Commands.

τὰ μὲν κρυπτὰ τοῦ Δεσπότου ἡμῶν Θεοῦ ζητεῖν· τὰ δὲ τοῦ δεδηλωμένα παντελῶς ἀγνοεῖν, Theod. *dial.* 1.

The secret things belong to the Lord our God: But those things which are revealed, belong to us, and to our children for ever, that they may do all the works of this Law, *Deut.* 29. 29. Having thus planed my way to the Text, or rather explained the way in my Text, I proceed to the deduction of a Corollary, or Conclusion from the words, which is the second thing I premised and promised.

Every Saint is very apt to be a slug in the way and work of God. *Quicken me* (says one of the chiefest and choicest of Saints) *in thy way*; and it is as much as if he should say in plain terms, Ah Lord, I am a dull Jade, and have often need of thy Spur, thy Spirit; This Prayer of *David* seems proof enough to this point; but if you desire farther confirmation, I shall produce an argument, *instar omnium*, that none shall dare to deny, nor be able to disapprove, and that is drawn from the topick of your own experience, and this is *argumentum* *Doctr.*

lugubre,

lugubre, like a Funeral Anthem, very ſad and ſorrowful Do you not feel, and find, to the grief of your own ſouls, that whereas you ſhould weep as if you wept not, rejoyce as if you rejoyced not, and buy as if you poſſeſſed not; *Inverſo ordine*, you weep for loſſes as if you would weep out your eyes; you rejoyce in temporal comforts as if you were in heaven; and you buy as if it were for ever and a day, *Pſa.* 49. 11. But *è contrario*, You pray as if you prayed not, hear as if you heard not, work for God as if you worked not. Now we know *experto credite* * a man that ſticks faſt in a ditch needs no reaſons to prove he is in, but remedies to pull him out. Your beſt courſe will be to propoſe the caſe how you may get rid of this unwelcom gueſt ſpiritual ſloth; it is a caſe we are all concerned in. *A ſini aures quis non habet*; Every man and mortal hath ſome of the Aſſes dulneſs and ſloth in him; and therefore I have brought a whip of ten ſtrings to ſcourge this ſloth and dulneſs out of us.

1. Keep a ſtrict watch over your eyes at all times, eſpecially when you are in duty; they eyes are the Port-holes that Sin and Sathan creep in at; it is accounted a great piece of charity to a mans body to cloſe his eyes when he is dead: I am ſure it is more charity to our ſouls to cloſe our own eyes whilſt we are living. See what a ſtrict guard *Job* keeps upon his eyes, that would not permit them at any time to view vain or wanton Objects, *Job* 31. 1. *I have made a covenant with mine eyes, why then ſhould I look upon a maid?* And the Prophet ſeems here to imply, that unleſs God would turn away his eyes from beholding vanity, he ſhould never be quickned in his way; It is *removere prohibens*, beholding vanity forbids the banes between the ſoul and *quickning*. If you will keep your houſes warm, you muſt keep your doors ſhut; If you will keep your hearts hot in a duty, you muſt keep your eyes ſhut. If thoſe doors ſtand wide open for all comers and goers, either your ſoul, *Dinah* like, will be gadding out, or Sathan will be getting in, by which the poor ſoul will be defiled and deflowred.

2. Send ſin packing bag and baggage? theſe two mutually generate one the other,

Mater me genuit, eadem mox gignitur ex me. Sin begets ſloth, and ſloth begets ſin: Sloth in *David* made him ſinful, and ſin in *David* made him ſlothful. Sin is the ſouls ſickneſs, now ſickneſs makes men lazy, lither, loath to ſtir. There is a diſeaſe incident to mans body, called the Lithargy, which makes him drowſie, ſleepy, negligent, and forgetful, it ſprings from a cold Cathart of a pitchy and glutinous nature which cools and benums the brain; Sloth is the Souls Lithargy, which makes it ſluggiſh, negligent, forgetful, this ariſes from the Cathar of ſin,

* *Cogita quomodo huc me liberes, non quomodo huc ceciderim quæras* Aug. Epiſt. 29. *Ebeu! quot ὄνυξ habet ſanctus David, vel potius ſpiritus ſanctus ad ſuam Cytharam.* Par, ὃν τὸ ὄφελον γε γενέτω τὸ ἔργον. Iſa. 57. 8. & alt. *Apperuit nobis in Paradiſo oculos ſatan. nunc omnis labor in eo nobis eſt, ut eos iterum claudamus & obtenebremus.* Luther. *Ridiculum eſt quod quidam reſpondent ſe ſpectaculis non moveri. quid.n. an ferrei. an ſaxei. an Adamantini ſunt. an ſapientiores, fortiores ſanctioris quam* David, Chryſ. in Pſal. 51. Nomt 1. *Ægritudo corporibus ſimillima eſt ægritudo animi.* Cic de fin. 7. 13.

ſin, benumming and ſtupifying the heart, and of all ſins, turn Covetouſneſs out of doors. There is a diſeaſe in the body, called the yellow Jaundice, which makes the perſons look yellow all over, this ſprings from the over-flowing of the gall, which over-ſpreading the whole man, makes it liveleſs, liſtleſs: Covetouſneſs is the yelow Jaundice of the ſoul, which ariſes from the over-flowing of the heart with love to yellow gold, by which a Chriſtian is dull'd and deadned. Thruſt a Knife into the earth, and it takes away the edge; throw earth upon the fire and it deadens the heat let but earthly mindedneſs creep into the heart, it takes off the edge, and deadens the heat of it to, or in any exerciſe of Religion *Solomon* calls it an evil diſeaſe *Eccleſ.* 6. 2. indeed the worſt of diſeaſes, a complicated diſeaſe; this diſeaſe does not only dead, but deſtroy the ſoul, 1 *Tim.* 6. 9. Drowns men in perdition, *Ver* 10. *The love of money is the root of all evil.* The birth of money is the burial of the mind; therefore our Saviour, *Luk.* 12. 15. bids us *take heed and beware of Covetouſneſs*: A double Caution, that we might have a double care. Above all keepings keep Covetouſneſs out of thy heart, *Pro.* 4. 23. for that will not only hinder thee from being active in duty, but help thee to be active againſt duty. The Phariſees who were *covetous*, derided him, *Luk.* 6. 14. They that drink of the water of the River *Hipanis*, at firſt are delighted with it, but afterward are ſo hurt by it, that *non injuria execramur*. It is moſt true of *Chryſorroas* the yellow River, at firſt draught it pleaſes, but afterward it makes them ſo dead drunk, that they become Dor-mice for ever after.

Auruge, ab aureo colore, ut Med.

Scythians ſmothered their Gods in the duſt, Chriſtians bury their godlineſs in the dunghil.

Fanus pecunia, funus animæ. Leoc.

Solinus, c. 14.

3. Frequent a quickning Miniſtry, *Ver.* 50 *Thy Word hath quickned me.* The Word of God is quick and powerful, *Heb.* 4. 12. living and operative, not only *formaliter*, and in it ſelf, but alſo *virtualiter*, in the vertue and efficacy of it, it makes men lively in their operation, *Acts* 7. 38. λογια ζωντα, Oracles making lively, *Jer.* 5. 14. *I will make my words in thy mouth fire.* Fire, as it is the moſt noble, ſo it is the moſt active Eliment, and makes other things active. Creatures almoſt dead for cold brought to the fire are made active and nimble: Witneſs *Æſops* Snake which the Country man brought in his hand, but when it had received heat from the fire, it diſturbed the whole houſe. Dr. *Ames* relates, that there was once ſuch cold Preaching in *Paris* that the Proteſtants were conſtrained to go into the Country to a godly Miniſter to be warmed; A godly Miniſter will warm a cold heart, and put quickneſs into a drowſie ſpirit.

Ζωὴ ἐνεργὴς

Ignis alma: ibus vim dat mirificam. Varro.

4. Make out to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe Promiſe and Office it is to make us active and vivacious, *Joh.* 10. 10. *I am come that they might*

might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. Christ came not only to make us alive, but also to make us lively. Persons who are slothful by reason of cold stiffening their joynts, make out to the Mineral and Metalline baths which heal and help them: The blood of Christ is the most precious mineral hot bath in the world, it will doubtless cure and quicken all cold and dull souls that come into it, *Zech.* 13. 1. It is the Fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness, Sloth, it is a very foul sin and filthy uncleanness, 1 *Joh.* 1. 7. *And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.* The sin of Sloth, which in some sense may be called all sin, it being *Pulvinar Satanæ*, the devils pillow that he layes his head on in the soul, 1 *Pet.* 2. 4, 5. Come to Christ the living Stone, and you shall come from Christ lively Stones.

Anima dat vitam & vivacitatem corpori, Christus dat vitam & vivacitatem animæ.

5. Get quickening love to the ways of God.

Qui non vult fieri desidiosus, amet.

● *vid* lib. 1. Amos 9.

Pliny tells us, That a rod of Myrtle in the hand of a Traveller will never suffer him to flag or faint, but keeps him fresh and lively to his journeys end, I am sure where love is in the heart, it will carry a man in the way of God with life. The Apostles did triumph in their tribulations; and how so? *Because the love of god is shed a bread in our hearts by the holy Ghost, which is given unto us Rom* 5. 5. *Orig.* is plentifully poured out as wine into bottles, which makes it spiritful, Love turns all pains into pleasures, and perils into perfumes. Love is the fore-horse in the souls Chariot, who draws all the other affections and faculties after him, what a loadstone was *Shechems* love to *Dinah*, *Gen.* 34. 19. It makes him communicate his wealth, change his Religion, circumcize his fore-skin. See how spiritual Love wrought in *Paul*, it was as strong Physick, ready to work out his bowels, 2 *Cor.* 5. 14. *For the love of God constraineth us*; Love hath not only an impulsive, but also a compulsive power, συνέχει. Love is a grace that is always big-bellied, and is in labour, always being delivered of some good duty or other. This Love put *Paul* upon exceeding pains, and excessive perils.

Omnis animæ motus radix est amor. Paris.

Ubi amor est non est labor, sed sapor. Bern. Serm. 85. in Cant.

Si tantum potuit cupiditas, quid potest charitas? Aug.

Metaphora à parturientibus sumpta. Grot

1. Exceeding pains, that never meer man took the like, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. *I laboured more abundantly than they all*; It must be great pains to preach the gospel fully from *Jerusalem* round about to *Illyricum*. Rom. 15. 10. ὁ κύκλῳ *in circulo*, or *circuitu*, making *Jerusalem* the Point, and the Regions round about the Circumference, and then the space could not be less than four thousand Miles: But if you take it *in a*

B. 2*e*,

collateral

collateral Line, taking in the Regions of *Attica*, *Bœotia*, *Achaia*, *Epirus*, *Asia minor*, *Cilicia*, *Cappadocia*, &c. it was 2000 Miles; but if you take it in a direct Line from *Jerusalem* to *Stridon*, a Town in *Illyricum*, it was above a thousand Miles; and though these tiresome journeys might have apologized for sparing, or at least for curtailing duties; yet *Paul* never measured out his pains by a few sands in a glass, but spent much time among the Saints in Praying, Preaching, Disputing. Very memorable is that pains of his, *Acts* 20.7. where *Paul* spends all the time from the Disciples meeting together on the Lords day, until midnight in holy Exercises.

3. His exceſſive perils; what a large Catalogue have you of them, 2 *Cor.* 11.23, *ad* 28. *In stripes above measure: In prisons more frequent: In deaths oft: of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one: Thrice was I beaten with rods: Once was I stoned: Thrice I suffered shipwrack: A night and a day I have been in the deep: In journeying often in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by my own Countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the City, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness*; All this laid together, well may we say with him, There was never a more fierce persecutor of the Gospel, nor a more fervid propagator of the Gospel; The first proceeded from his hatred against Christ, the last proceeded from his love to Christ.

* *Nemo acrior inter persecutores, nemo prior inter peccatores.* Aug. Tom. 10. pag. 202.

6. By faith apply the quickening Promises, and the Promises of quickning.

1. The quickning Promises; Promises are steel spurs that will reach the dull heart to the quick; they are singular Plaisters, if well applied, to draw out the corruption of sloth; they are the sovereign *Elixars* whose quintessence will make the soul full of spirits, 2 *Pet.* 1.4. *Whereby are given to us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine Nature.* Precious Promises as stones, are precious, which have egregious vertue in them, that by them we might be made partakers of the Divine Nature, not of the substance of God, as *Servetus* stubbornly defended even to death; But of those divine qualities and gracious dispositions, which will stand with Gods Nature to communicate, and our nature to participate. Now Gods Divine Nature is an Act, and our Divine Nature is active: Now the right applying promises will be very vertuous to make us vigorous, to come as nigh the image and life of God as possibly we can. *Plato* saies, it is our chiefest good, *Deo penitus conformem fieri*, to bear the Character of God upon us.

Cardan. subtil. l. 7.

Bez. in loc. *Non transformatione naturæ humanæ in divinam, sed participatione donorum quibus conformes divinæ naturæ simus.* Par.

2. The Promiſes of quickning. *David* preſſes God to be as good as his word, *Pſal.* 119.25. *Quicken thou me according to thy word;* He is often upon this ſtring, *Ver.* 107, 154. reſolving not to let God alone until he kept his word, *Iſa.* 40.31. *But they that wait upon the Lord ſhall renew their ſtrength, they ſhall mount up with wings as Eagles, they ſhall run and not be weary, and they ſhall walk and not faint.* Our ſoul, as a Bee, muſt ſuck honey from this flower to quicken it ſelf. Say thus to thy ſelf: Soul, God hath promiſed I ſhall mount up with Eagles wings, fly through difficulties and duties with celerity, he is a God able, true, willing, therefore I may be aſſured of this aſſiſtance. Oh this honey will enliven thee more than *Jonathans* honey enlightned him, 1 *Sam.* 14 26,29. Who muſt dye becauſe he had eaten honey, and if he had not eaten honey he muſt have died.

Coimus in cælum ut deum quaſi manufacta precationibus ambiamus orantes, hæc via deo grata. Tertul. *ad* 39. Διώκω more venatorum perſequentium feram. Aret. *Ignatius.* Epiſt. *ad* Rom.

7. Mind quickning examples. A dull Jade will put himſelf *faſter on* when he ſees other horſes gallop before him. The Apoſtle having muſtered up in rank and file the Examples of thoſe famous Worthies, *Heb.* 11. Does, *Heb.* 12. 1. excite them with patience to run the race that was ſet before them. If the rare acts of *Miltiades* would not ſuffer *Themiſtocles* to ſleep, then the famous Actions of *Gods Worthies* ſhould not ſuffer us to ſlumber. View *Elias* how he went up in a fiery Chariot to heaven in his ſpirit, before he went in a fiery Chariot to heaven in his perſon *James* 5.17. Eye *Paul* how induſtriouſly and indefatigably he purſues, even as a Beagle his chaſe with full cry, and all celerity, *Phil.* 3.10, *ad* 15. Obſerve *Ignatius* how he goes to the beaſts to be devoured, as if he had gone to a Bridal to be married. *Laſtly,* Slight not the Martyrs in Q. *Maries* daies, who went to the fire as if they had been going to a bone-fire. *Seeſt thou this woman, (ſaith our Saviour to Simon of Mary Magdalen) with what activity and affection ſhe hath waſhed and wiped my feet,* (her tears being the water, her hair the towel) *let it provoke thee to more diligence and devotion, Luk.* 7.44, 45. Examples are pricking and provoking goads to quicken us: fires to light our candles by, to heat our bodies with.

En amo te, & hoc parum eſt, amem validius. Aug. lib. *de* Mcd. c. 18.

8. Keep quickning company. As bad company is water to quench, ſo good company is oyl to quicken fervour; As Iron ſharpens Iron, ſo one gracious heart ſets an edge upon another, *Prov.* 27.17. Holy Companions are bellows, ἀναζωπυρεῖν, to blow up, and make burn the graces that lye in embers, 2 *Tim.* 1. 16. The gracious affections of Saints are called beds of ſpices, *Cant.* 6.2. Holy conference of holy company is the rubbing and chafing thoſe ſpices to make them ſent and ſend forth their perfumes. *Alexander* where ever he came, perfumed the Room with his

Bellum, comes pro vehiculo.

his presence; so does every believer with his speeches. *David* who desires quickning, picks out quickning company. *I am a companion of all them* (rich or poor) *that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts*, Psal. 11. 63. *Paul* is pressed in spirit by the company and conference of *Silas* and *Timotheus*, Acts 18. 5. the two Disciples hearts burn'd within them in their journey to *Emaus*, by that sweet discourse they had with Christ, *Luke* 4. 32.

9. Consider quickning considerations. They that are apt to faint and tire in a journey, carry about their bottles of water to quicken their spirits; let these ten considerations be such bottles to you when you tire in the journey of a duty.

I. Consider how odious and abominable Sloth is to man, or God; the *Romans* judged sloth and idleness worthy of the greatest contempt. *Asinus ad lyram, Asinus ad tibiam*, are Proverbs of the greatest derision and disgrace: how contemptibly does *Jacob* speak of *Issachar, a strong Ass couching down between two burthens*, Gen. 49. 14, 15. yea God himself refuses the first-born of an Ass in Sacrifice, *Exod.* 13. 13. *Bellarmin* gives this reason, because it was *animal tardigradum*, a slow paced and sluggish creature, which God hates; God being a pure act, loves pure activity. Oh what thunder-claps and stacks of threatnings may you hear from the Mount *Ebal* of his Word, able to make the most sluggish *Caligula* to creep under his bed for shelter. *Cursed be he that does the work of the Lord negligently*, Jer. 48. 10. *Cursed be the deceiver that hath in his flock a male, and sacrifiseth unto the Lord a corrupt thing*, Mal. 1. 14. God threatens to remove the candlestick from the Church of *Ephesus*, because she was grown remiss in her first love, *Rev.* 2. 5, 6. he terrifies the Church of *Laodicea* with the menace of spuing her out of his mouth for her lukewarmness; the servant who had not returned *Cent. per Cent.* for his talent, is called wicked and slothful servant, and cast into the darkest dungeon, *Matth.* 25. 16, 30. how would this consideration well considered on, cause all slothful servants ears to tingle, and their hearts to tremble.

Zon. *Annal. l.* 2. *Petr.* 87. *d. l.* 3. *cap.* 16. *Enervos animos odisse virtus solet* Val. Max. *lib.* 2. *cap.* 7. *tardis mentibus virtus non facilè committitur.* Tust. *quæst. lib.* 5.

II. Consider, sloth exposes you to all manner of sin, especially these two desperate and dangerous ones.

1. Sordid Apostacy.
2. Spiritual Adultery.

1. Sordid Apostasy. Sloth in the Soul is like Green Sickness in the body of a Virgin, which makes her not only fall from her colour, strength, stomach to wholsom food, but also to long and lust after trash and trumpery, coles, soot, ashes: the *Galatians* because they were

* *Tepidus as ſi callum obduxerit fiet Apoſta-ſia.* Greg. *Moral. lib.* 22. *cap.* 5.

ἀνόητοι, without mind and metal, do therefore prove Apoſtates, beginning in the Spirit, ending in the fleſh. *Gal.* 3.1.3. * falling off from fervor, will turn to falling away to folly. The ſlothful man *will not* bring his hand to his mouth, *Prov.* 19. 24. it is expounded of a *ſlothful* Miniſter, who will not bring *voci ſuæ vitam ſuam*, his works to his words; though this be an undoubted truth of lazy and ſlothful *Miniſters*, yet the Proverb holds true of all ſluggards tendency to falling away in their hand from their mouth, *i.e.* from *what* they have formerly profeſſed. Conſider how great and grievous a ſin Apoſtacy *is*, it was the firſt ſin that ever was committed, it was the ſin of *the Devils*, for which they were caſt out of Heaven, and caſt down into Hell, *Heb.* 10. 38. *if any man draw back, my Soul ſhall have pleaſure in him*; a metaphor taken from a ſluggiſh Jade, who finding the load come heavy, draws back again; the backſlider in heart, much more in hand, *from* Gods way ſhall be fill'd with his own waies, *Prov.* 14. 14. *i.e.* he hath run away from his Captain, Colours Cauſe, and he ſhall have Marſhal Law for it; it will be worthy my pains and your patience, to give an inſtance what ſevere Martial Law God hath executed on *all* Runnagadoes and Revolters.

1. Miniſters. *Judas* who revolted from his Maſter and Miniſtrie, turning from being a guard to his Saviour, to be a guide to the Souldiers, *Acts* 1.17. afterward hanged himſelf, his bowels burſt out of his belly, and ſo he took his proper and peculiar place in Hell, *verſ.* 18. 25.

Scult. *annal.* 1528. *John Speiſer* Preacher at *Ainsborough* in *Germany*, who preached ſo peſtilently and powerfully that the common ſtrumpets left the Brothel-houſes then tolerated, and betook themſelves to a better courſe, *Ann.* 1523., yet afterward revolting to the Papiſts, he periſhed miſerably.

Joſeph. *Antiq. l.* 1. *c.* 11. *ut condimentum ſit aliis.* Aug. *lib.* 16. *de Civ. Dei, c.* 30. 2. People. *Remember Lots wife*, Luke 17.32. who turning back to *Sodom*, was turned into a pillar of ſalt to ſeaſon us, that we may be preſerved from the ſtinking ſin of Apoſtacy. *Julian* a great Profeſſor in the daies of *Trajan*, but revolting, was torn in pieces, and devoured of Dogs. The Emperour *Julian* the Apoſtate was wounded with an arrow none knowing from whence, in his War againſt the *Perſians*, who throwing his blood up to Heaven, died, ſcornfully crying. *Viciſti Galilæe, viciſti.*

II. Spiritual Adultery. Bodily ſloth expoſes to corporal Adultery. *Quæritur Egiſthus.*

Davids inſtance clears it ſufficiently, 2 *Sam.* 11. 2. Spiritual ſloth expoſes to Spiritual Adultery. *Rom.* 1, 21, 23. *When they knew God, they*

they glorified him not as God. What follows upon this sloth in not glorifying God as he ought to be glorified, *v.* 23. *They changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image like to corruptible man, & to birds, & four-footed beasts, and creeping things.* Sloth is the high-way to Superstition, and Idleness the road-way to Idolatry, 1 *Cor.* 10. 7. *neither be you idolaters, as were some of them, as it is written, the people sate down to eat, and drink and rose up to play.* by which is implied, their Idleness was the cause of their idolatry. When *Demas* grew lazy and slothful in his Ministry, he turned Priest in an Idols Temple, where he had less work and more wages, 2 *Tim.* 4. 10. consider idolatry and superstition are God-provoking, Land-destroying, Soul-damning sins; no wonder *John* should conclude his Epistle with *keep your selves from Idols,* 1 John 5. 21.

* *Dorotheus in Synop. adeo proclive est in servo Mammonæ transire in sacerdotem diaboli.* Dr. *Arrowsmith,* Tact. Sacr. *Gravissimum præcautum. Aqui.* 2a 2æ. *quæst.* 94. *Art.* 3. *Principia è crimen, & summus hujus sæculi reatus.* Tert. *Omnis qui ad paradisum redire desiderat, oportet transire per ignem & aquam.* Aug. *in serm. ad Lipp.* * *Brugens. Non dormientibus provenit regnum cælorum, nec otio & desidia in torpentibus beatitudo æternitate ingeritur.* Prosp. *de vit. contempl.* Qui radium currit, eniti debet, & contendere quam maxime possit ut vincat. Tul. 3. Off. *Potens cum ardore.*

III. consider how impossible it is, that creeping Snails in Gods way should ever get to their journeys end; fair end softly goes far, but never so far as Heaven, *Mat.* 11. 12. *The Kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force,* *ἁρπάζουσιν, a Metaphor taken from storming Cities and Castles, they storm Heaven, hang their Petarhs of prayers on heaven gates and blow them open, that get Heaven by a conquest; storming is not work either for the fearful or the slothful, 1 *Cor.* 9. 24. *So run that you may obtain;* not creep, but run, not run, but so run, not indifferently, but industriously, as the racers in the *Isthmian* Games (to which the Apostle here alludes) who did stretch and strein their legs and limbs that they might gain the prize, *Luke* 13. 24. *strive to enter in at the strait gate:* Heaven hath a very strait gate, we must crowd yea crush our selves if ever we get in, ἀγωνίζεσθε, play the Champions to a very agony, *for many I say unto you will seek to enter in, and shall not be able,* ζητήσουσιν. shall seek with industry and endeavour.

IV. Consider how equitable it is that you should be as active in the way of God, as you were once in the way of sin and Sathan, *Rom.* 6. 19. *I speak after the manner of men,* i. e. I speak Reason as well as Religion; *as you have yielded your members servants unto uncleanness and to iniquity, unto iniquity. As,* not of quality but equality, *even so now yield your members servants to righteousness, unto holiness;* even so: in the same manner and the same measure: this very consideration wrought effectually upon *Paul* himself, who as he had formerly sinned more than all, so afterwards he laboured more than all; the time he could not recover by recalling, he does recover by redeeming. What a piercing, and

Humanum quiddam dico Basm. Sicut non quæ litatis sed æqualitatis. Cyprian. πολὺς ὁ ἔρως· ἔνθα πλείων ὁ συντριβή. Naz. *Orat.* 18.

and prevailing ſpur would this be to a dull and ſluggiſh ſoul. Ah ſoul, what a ſhame, what a ſin is this, to be a ſlow ſnail in the way of *God*, that have been a ſwift Dromedary in the way of ſin.

V. Conſider how you contradict your own prayers, your very *Pater Noſter*, wherein you deſire Gods will ſhould be ſo done by you on earth, as it is done by the Angels in Heaven; now thoſe winged *Mercuries* and meſſengers of heaven do ſpeedily and ſpritefully execute the Commandments of God, *Pſal.* 113.20. *Bleſs the Lord ye his Angels which excel in ſtrength, that do his Commandments, hearkning to the voice of his word*; Theſe heavenly Purſevants ſtand liſtning to know their princes Royal pleaſure, and then they go to execute it.

Angelos περβ- μυθοντας τα τῶν Θεῶν ωρὸς ἀνθρώπους, ὑ τους ἀνθρω- ωους ωρὸς τὰς Θεὰς ἐσθ ρμας. Plutarch.

1. With all celerity and ſpeed, they are ſaid to have wings, *Iſa.* 6. 2. which are the Emblems of velocity, *v.* 6. the Seraphim came *flying* to *Iſaiah* with a coal from the Altar. *Gabriel* is ſent poſt from *Heaven*, *Dan.* 9. 21. being cauſed to fly ſwiftly, extraordinary haſt, that he ſeemed weary and tyred; the Angels flying upon Gods embaſie is always very ſwift: the Schoolmen make a doubt whether they do *ab extremo ad extremum tranſire*; yet it ſeems they can mend their pace in their flight from Heaven to Earth, and ſo back again, *which is* (as thoſe wiſe Aſtronomers, who have been there to meaſure it) backward and forward above one hundred and ſixty millions of miles.

Clavius in Sphæram.

2 With ardency and intenceneſs they are called *Seraphs*, *Iſa* 6. 2. *Igniti*, fiery, yea a flame of fire, *Heb.* 1. 7. *Elijahs* charet and horſes of fire, were Angels appearing in thoſe forms, 2 *Kin* 3. 11. of all the Elements fire is the moſt intenſe and active, the mouth of *fire devours and* deſtroys all that comes before it; many of the Heathens did worſhip fire for their god, becauſe it devoured all their other gods; *thoſe fiery* Hoſts of God are very devouring, one of them in one night deſtroyed a hundred fourſcore and five thouſand *Aſſyrians*; 2 Kin. 10. 35.

3, With alacrity and cheerfulneſs; it is a great part of *their* joy in Heaven, that they do Gods ſervice with joy; as ſoon as ever they were created they re joyced that they ſhould be employed in ſuch honourable ſervice, *Job* 38. 7. *When the morning Stars ſang together, and all the ſons of God ſhouted for joy*; how cheerfully did the Angels bring tidings of Chriſts birth to the World, as appears by their Praiſing God to the higheſt of their power, *Luke* 2. 14. *Glory be to God in the higheſt*, &c. ſurely if you conſider Angels worſhip, and doing Gods will, it will make you leave off your ſloth or your ſervice; either cauſe you to pray better, or not to pray at all.

VI. Conſider you loſe the very ſoul and life of your duty, if you do

not

not perform it as for your life and ſoul. You come to ſeek and ſee the face of God in the glaſs of ordinances, *Pſal.* 27.8. to have communion with him, to fetch comfort from him; to get ſome kiſſes of him, *Cant.* 1.3. to mortifie ſome luſt, to increaſe ſome grace, to ſtrengthen your aſſurance, to teſtifie your duty, to expreſs your affection, &c. now ſpiritual ſloth hinders you of all this; dull and drowſie eyes cannot ſee God, heavy and ſlothful hearts cannot receive thoſe benefits and bleſſings from God. Sloth is a ſluce-gate to the current of Gods grace and favour. *Jupiter* rained a ſhower of gold into *Danaes* lap, but God will never rain a ſhower of grace, joy and comfort into a ſluggards heart. If you loſe the bleſſed ſight of God here in ordinances, you ſhall loſe the beatifical ſight of God hereafter in glory, 2 *Cor.* 3.18. *But we all, with open face beholding as in a glaſs the glory of the Lord, are changed into the ſame image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord*; then have we the kernel of a duty (every thing elſe is but a ſhell) when our employment is on Earth, and our enjoyment in Heaven; when we have ſo ſought Gods Face, that our face comes away ſhining, and we have ſo poured out our hearts to God, that God hath poured out his heart to us, that we return home like Bees loaded with honey, filled with the comforts of the Holy Ghoſt.

Lambunt petram, mel non ſugunt. Cyp. de Can. don.

Torpor non ſinit Deum eſſe beneficum.

VII. Conſider the infinite and wonderful glory, greatneſs, majeſty of him you appear before and approach unto in your duties. A God you are not able to conceive, nor I to expreſs. See how the Scripture ſhadows him out unto us (and indeed it is but a ſhadow in compariſon of his ſubſtance) *Iſa.* 40. 12. *Who hath meaſured the waters in the hollow of his hand? and meted out Heaven with a ſpan, and comprehended the duſt of the earth in a meaſure, and weighed the mountains in ſcales, and the hills in a ballance?* v. 15. *behold the nations are as a drop of the bucket, and are counted as the ſmall duſt of the ballance: behold he taketh up the Iſles as a very little thing*, v. 16. *and* Lebanon *is not ſufficient to burn, nor the beaſts thereof ſufficient for a burnt offering*, v. 17. *all things before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him leſs than nothing and vanity. Ex pede Herculis.* By this glorious deſcription we may gueſs (and that is all) at enough in God, to ſcare us from coming to God in a dull and drowſie manner: the Heathens who worſhip'd the Sun for their god, durſt not offer up any thing but a flying horſe to him in ſacrifice: our God is more glorious, ſwift ſeeing than ten thouſand Suns, therefore we ſhould not dare to offer up any thing but a winged Cherubim, or ſwift flying Eagle to him in ſervice.

Quæ participatione nobis veneranda ſunt, in comparatione ejus memoranda non ſunt. Greg. Mor. l. 18. c. 27.

VIII. Conſider how induſtrious and indefatigable an adverſary you

you have that lies always in ambush to wrong you, yea to ruine you. Sathan is the unwearied Peripatetick, who walks up and down for prey and spoil, *Job* 1. 7. now the dull soul is his prey; a slug ship is a purchase for the Pyrat, and a sluggish soul for the Devil; it is holy and wholsom advice given by *Peter* 1, 5, 8. *Be sober, be vigelant; because your adversary the Devil as a roaring Lyon, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour;* the Devil (says pious and plain *Latymer*) is the most diligent Bishop in *England*, he is ever at his plough: no Lording nor loytering may hinder him, his office is to hinder Religion, to maintain Superstition, to set up Idolatry, to teach all kind of Popery, where his plough goes, there away with Books, and up with Candles, away with Bibles, and up with Beads; away with the light of the Gospel, and up with the light of Candles, yea at noon days. How should this quicken us to be active for God and our soul, that have an enemy so active always against God and our soul. You need not quicken a Mariner to make out all the cloath he can, that knows a Pyrat hath him in chase at stern; *timor addidit alas*, fear will spread the sails which are the wings of the ship, the Devil the great Pyrat of souls to make prize and pillage of us and our graces, hath us in dayly pursute, how careful should we be to fill the sails of our souls with the strong gales of the Spirit, that he may neither overtake us, nor take us.

Mr. Hugh Latimer's Sermon preached in the shrouds at Pauls Church in London. 18. Jan. an: 1548. of the Plough. pag. 21.

Prius conditionem, complexionem uniuscujusq; perspicit, & tum tentationis laqueos apponit. Greg. Mor. lib 9.

IX. Consider when you slothfully and sluggishly perform duties, you do but mock God, *Gal.* 6. 7. God is not mocked, *i.e.* God will not have his nose played with.

συκτηιζειν cum naso ludere, Calv. *Nasus derisioni dicatus.* Pliny.

God is mocked three ways.

1. Directly when men by deriding speeches mock the Essentiality, or Personality of the Godhead. As,

1. The Essentiality, when a blasphemous Quaker shall say God is nothing else but the letters read backward wch is (*Horresco referens.*) Or

2ly The Personality, As

1. God the Father, when he shall be called a Cooper hooping his tubs when it thundreth, * or an old man fitting in heaven, as your common and country people usually jeer.

* Perkins.

2. God the Son, when *Julian* shall gibe him with the Crucified God, or *Libanus* the Carpenters Son, or as pope * *Leo* 10th to Cardinal *Bembus* when he brought a piece out of the Gospel to comfort him, when sick, away with those forgeries and follies.

* *Apage istas nugas de Christo.* Pac. Med. hist. Eccles.

3. God the holy Ghost, when *Securus* shall call him the three headed *Cerberus*, and ridiculous invention of humane curiosity.

2. Reflexively, when men gibe and jeer the faithful messengers of God,

God, 2 *Chron.* 36 16. but they mocked the messengers of God: to mock the messengers of God is by reflection to mock the God of those messengers. *Cum multis aliis.*

3. Interpertatively, when men do such actio s as plainly evidence a mockage of God. I have read of a fellow in want, tha earnestly intreated *Mercury* to send him some relief, promising him that whatever he found he would sacrifice half to him, he found nuts, he eat the Kernels and offered the shels to *Mercury*; which he resented as an high affront; activity in duty is the Kernel, sloth is the shell, which we offering to God in service is interpreted a high and horrid mocking. *Augustus Cæsar* being invited to one of his subjects houses, and being slothfully and negligently entertained took it as a derision. Duty is an inviting God to our house, if we entertain him sluggishly and carelessly he will call you to an account for your impudent familiarity with him, and make you hold up your hand at his bar for being guilty of taking his name in vain. *Exod.* 20. 7.

Nesciebam me tibi tam esse familiarem Erasm. Adag.

X. Consider how active Christ was in doing us service, he did *omnem movere lapidem*; He was so enlarged about the thoughts of doing the work, that he was straitned until he was about it, *Luk.* 12. 50. *I have a baptism to be baptized with, & how am I straitned untill it be accomplished*; *i. e.* I have a death of the Cross to suffer for Mans Redemption, and I am pressed with an *Antiperistasis* until I have finished it: Or else, as *Grotius* renders it, I am with child of my Passion, and how do I long for my delivery. I am in pain until I am in pain, much like some women, who breed their children with more pain than they do bring them forth. When that day of his travel came, it was the day of his triumph, *Col.* 2. 5. *Triumphing over them in it.* The *Athenian Codrus* being informed by the Oracle, That the People, whose King should be slain in the Battel, should be Conquerors, disrobed himself, went into the Enemies Quarters in the habit of a poor man, with a burden on his back, that he might steal a death to make his People Conquerours: Christ disrobed himself of the Garments of Glory, assumed the form of a servant, endured contradictions of sinners, held his peace when falsely charged, that he might steal a death for his People, that so they might be more then Conquerors, *Heb.* 12. 2. *Looking unto Jesus the Author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame.* Shall Christ give you such a Copy of activity, and will you blot and blur it with sloth and sluggishness? shall Christ go swiftly to death? and we go sluggishly to duty. Plutarch.

10 Beg the quickning Spirit, this is *instar omnium*, none like it, as *David*

vid said of *Goliahs* sword. Sloth is the Kings Evil of the soul, & none but the King of Heaven can cure it by his hand, which is his Spirit, *Ps.* 119. 32. *I will run the way of thy Commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.* Idleness is the souls prison, sloth is her shackle, the spirit of God only can knock off her fetters, & give Goal-delivery to her, *Rom.* 8.26. *The Spirit helpeth our infirmities*, of ignorance, dulness, deadness, sluggishness, & enables, yea ennobles us with gracious, copious, filial affections, even *groans & sighs that are unutterable*, expressions not to be expressed. *Cant.* 1.4. *Draw me, and I will follow thee*; there is her prayer, and her promise, and there is no doubt of her performance; she will as certainly follow as the Iron the Load-stone, or the Card the North pole, *Cant.* 4.16. *Awake O North-wind, and come, O South, blow upon my Garden, that the Spices thereof may flow out.* Awake and come, there is the Prayer, O North and South wind, there is the Spirit, the soul *that is the* Garden, gracious affections they are the Spices that flow out.

Quest. *But some precious Soul whispers in mine ears (I bless God) I am not troubled with this lethargy, my sails are so filled, that my mill goes and grinds nimbly, only I am afraid the wind blows not from the right quarter; pray therefore satisfie my conscience in this case, Whether my activity in duty proceed from the Spirit of God?*

Answ. We may easily be deceived by our enlargments, because there are many winds and gales blowing from several quarters, w^ch may set the soul in active going and doing; as popular applause, high opinions of the Preacher, taking expressions in prayer, flourishing novelties & notions in a Sermon, satanical insuffions, common & ordinary inspirations of the Holy Ghost, vouchsafed to reprobates, *Heb.* 6.4,5,6. All which or any of which may so draw and delight the heart, that (as *Orpheus* pipe) they or it may make the heart dance in a duty, and yet for all this, it may be possible, yea probable, the heart may dance after the Devils pipe, *Ezek.* 33.32. the resolution of this case would have been fitter for some antient, experienced *Master of Assemblies*, (whose *Bible* is more in his *heart*, than *head*, than for so weak and worthless a person as I am, who may truly say with *Agur*, ἀνοητότερος πάντων, Prov. 30 2. *Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man.* Yet seeing Providence hath laid the lot at my door, to use *Peters* words a little altered, *Acts* 3.5. Though silver and golden experiences and expressions I have none, yet such as I have I shall willingly impart and communicate to you. If you will lend me your *patience*, I will give you my *pains* in resolving this weighty and worthy case of Conscience, *how a Christian may know, whether his activity in duty be from the Spirit of God.*

I shall

I shall commend to you these eight Characteristical Notes as so many Touch-stones.

1. When we have beforehand earnestly prayed and prepared our souls for such activity, when you say & do to your soul, as *Jehu* did to the worshippers of *Baal*, 2 Kin. 10. 19. I have a great Sacrifice to offer O my soul, warn and summon in all the power, and parts of soul and body, be sure that not one be wanting, and so by reading, meditating and Prayer get our souls into a holy frame and gracious posture, & humbly, yea heartily also beg and beseech of God, to carry us on Eagles wings through the duty we are drawing near to, if we mount and soar aloft as (*Aquila in nubibus*) Eagles to Heaven in that duty, we may safely & surely conclude that activity is from the Spirit. When Mariners buy a wind of the Witches (as they do in *Lapland* and other places) and they have it at every place and point, according to the purchase of the one, and the promise of the other, they may undoubtedly conclude that wind came from the spirit of the Devil. When we beg a wind from God and we enjoy it at the time according to our desire, we may upon good ground say, that wind came from the Spirit of God; this will appear very clear if you please to lay together these four things.

1. It is Gods Prerogative to hear Prayer, *Psal.* 65. 2. *Oh thou that hearest Prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come.*

2. It is Gods Promise to hear Prayer, *Ps.* 81. 10. *Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it*; spread thy sails by Prayer, and I will fill them by my Spirit, *Luke* 11. 13. *He will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask it.*

3. It is Gods usual course to perform his Promise, κατ' ὁμοιον, in that very kind, *Psal.* 10. 17. *Lord thou hast heard the desire of the humble; thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear. I said not to the seed of Jacob, seek ye me in vain*, Isa. 45. 19.

4. It hath been the constant practise of Gods people to look after their Prayers, to see what success they have had. Prayers come not out of the Ark of their souls, as the Raven did, never to return, but as *Noahs* Dove, to come back again with an Olive branch into the soul, *Psa.* 85. 8. *I will hear what God the Lord will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his Saints.* Saints do not shoot the arrows of their Prayers as children do, shoot them away and never mind them, but as Archers that shoot their arrows up at a Bird, and stand expecting their returns down again; if our activity come from the return of prayers, it must be from the Spirit. When *Elias* prayes so fervently, that fire might come down from Heaven, and consume the sacrifice, and it did so, the people might justly cry out, *the Lord he is God, the*

Lord he is God, 1 Kings 18. 37, 39. So when we pray for fire and fervour to come down from Heaven on our service, and it comes, we may cry, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of God.

2. When our activity carries us *supra sphæram activitatis*, above the reach of any creature; when dust is carried up on high the wind does it, when dust and ashes are carried up on high in a duty, the *wind of* the Spirit does it; If a Chymist dissolves a stone into drops of water, we may be sure some help higher than a creature *hath* hel, ed him. If a heart of stone shall be dissolved into drops of water *in a duty*, it must be some help higher than a creatures must do it? if *Ganymedes* be carried up to heaven, it must be by the help of *Jupiter*; if the soul be carried up to Heaven so in a duty (that an extasie rather than an activity) it is by the help of the Spirit; if our spirit carries *in a duty* with sighs and groans that are unutterable, it *was* enabled *by the Spirit* of God, *Rom.* 8. 26; when we are carried through difficulties, doubts, duties, dangers, that seem impossible, impassible, by reason of the Lyons in the way, and the Lyons in the streets, that stand open-mouthed to devour us, *Pro.* 26. 13. Then to venture *through* all, fire, fury, faggot, this is of the Spirit of God. When *Daniel* shall continue active in Prayer three times a day, with his windows open, that all might see him, when there were Lyons in the way indeed, *Dan*, 6, 10. When *Luther* in outward streights shall have such inward enlargements that he comes off from his knees with a *vicimus, vicimus*. When he shall go to *Worms* to own the truth of Christ, though all the tiles upon the houses were devils. Of these Prayers, and Practices, *and such like*, we may say, as *Protogenes* of a curious Line, none but *Apelles* could draw this, none but the Spirit of God could enlarge and enable *to do this*.

Sheldan.

3. When we feel and find our hearts after duty filled and fraighted *with* spiritual joys, and heavenly comforts when our Soul is like a Merchants ship returned from the *Indies* loaden as deep as it can swim, *with all* variety of Spices, and precious Commodities, When we have such inward ravishings that our heart is a little heaven, fill'd up to the brim w^th^ joy, as our saviour prayed for us, *Joh* 15 11, Enjoying that joy unspeakable and full of glory, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. Heaven antidated, or Heaven before-hand; when we have that joy which is the earnest of Gods love, 1 *Cor.* 2. 9, 10. *Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared* (in this life) *for them that love him*; but God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit. This joy is not only the fulfilling of Christs Prayer, but also the fruit of the Spirit, *Gal.* 5. 22. When the King had brought his spouse into his Bride-chamber after her -

her prayer, he raviſhes her heart with joy, *Cant.* 1. 4. When *David* had been at prayer, *Lord lift thou up the light of thy Countenance upon me*: Then comes that rapture, *Thou haſt put gladneſs in my heart more than in the time that their Corn, and Wine, and Oyl encreaſed*, Pſ. 4. 6, 7. When we have greater joy after duty than Worldlings have after Harveſt, which is their greateſt joy, *gaudium meſſis, is meſſis gaudii*; The joy of their harveſt is all the harveſt of their joy, which this Worlds Earth-worms are likely to enjoy, *Luk.* 16. 25. *Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receiveſt thy good things*, ſays *Abraham* to *Dives*.

4. When our activity in duty is conſtant, like the motion of the fire in its Orb (which Philoſophers tell us) is perpetual. *My ſoul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times*; Pſ. 119. 20. The Spirit dwels in us as his Temple, 1 *Cor.* 6. 19. The body is the Temple, the Soul the Lute, the affections the Strings, the Holy Ghoſt the Muſician, who in all our duties makes melody in our hearts, *Eph.* 5. 19 Where the Ship is alway ſailing, the wind is alway blowing, and we are ſure that ſailing comes from the Wind; if the wind lies ſtill, the Ship lies ſtill, is becalmed, 1 *Cor.* 3. 17. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, ἐλευθερία, freedom and liberty are oppoſed to three thing.

1. Neceſſity. 2. Co action. 3. Reſtraint. Now the Spirit of God ſets our heels (*ut aiunt*) our hearts at liberty, not only from neceſſity, co-action, but alſo reſtraint. Setting at liberty is freeing us from impriſonment, and giving freedom to go whither we will. The Spirit admits us to that liberty which is 1. The purchaſe of Chriſt, *Gal.* 5. 1. 2. The priviledge of our filiation, *Rom.* 8. 21. *The glorious liberty of the Sons of God*; The Spirit makes us act as it ſelf; *Neſcit tarda molimina ſpiritus ſancti gratia.* Ambr. 2 *Cor* 3. 6. *The Spirit quickneth*, ζωοποιεῖ, makes lively, *Rom.* 8. 2. As the ſpirit of life frees us from the law of ſin and death, ſo from the Law of ſloth and deadneſs.

Per nomen libertatis non tantum intelligo a peccati & carnis ſervitute manumiſſionem. Sed etiam fiduciam quam concipimus ex adoptionis noſtræ teſtimonio; convenit cum Rom. 8. 15. *Calv. in* 2 Cor. 2 7.

Object. But ſome poor ſoul cries out, *Woe is me, I am undone, I find, none of this Spirit in me. I am none of theſe fixed Stars about the Æquinoctial, that move many Millions in an hour, but a ſlow paced Planet, that finiſhes not his courſe in many years, whoſe motion is ſo dull that not diſcernable. Sure I am caſt out of the firmament of Gods favour, and ſhall be a wandring Star*, to whom is reſerved the blackneſs or darkneſs for ever, *Jude verſ.* 13.

Anſw. It is the miſery of Miniſters, that they cannot ſpeak of the experimental ſublimities of ſome, but others are preſently deſponding and deſpairing. I would not for a world quench the ſmoaking flax, or break the bruiſed reed, *Mat.* 12. 20. Yea, I would with all my ſoul

put

put the lambs in my bosom which cannot go, or but slowly, and gently lead them that are with young, *Isa.* 40. 11. I speak this to them that are upon the staves of *Jacobs* Ladder in their ascending to heaven, to be a loadstone to draw them up, not a millstone to drag them down. But to answer more appositely.

1. I intend it in opposition to them who live in a course of sin, yet now and then in a duty to feel a flash of joy, and thereupon presume of their good estate, and not to those who with *Zachary* and *Elizabeth* walk in all the Commandments and Ordinances of God blameless, *Luk.* 1. 7. and yet do not obtain this constant favour.

2. I lay it down a positive sign and *inclusive*, that those, and all those that have constant activities, (though differing for the altitudes and degrees) may be certain of the Spirit, as those that have Trade-winds from Port to Port may be sure they sail by the wind; or as *those that* have the Organ, *medium*, and object rightly disposed, may be sure they see, *Bellarmine* tells a story of an old man, that always arose from duty with these words, * *Be you shut, O my eyes, be shut for I shall never behold any fairer Object than Gods face, which I have now beheld.* But not a negative sign *exclusive*, as if those (that repent of sin, meditate on the Promises, pour out Prayers, walk with God, wait on Ordinances) who have it not, were cast-aways. I am confident that many that lye wind-bound in the harbour shall in due time get to the Haven.

* *Claudimini oculi mei, claudimini: nihil enim pulchrius jam videbitis.*

3. There are four things belong to a Christian: 1. A habit. 2. An Act. 3. Degrees of that Act. 4. Sense of all these. He may have the three first, and yet want the sense of them, *A ship may sail, and yet the* Mariner not sensible of it.

4. There is no Rule but hath some Exception, no Experience in one Believers heart but a contrary experience may be found in another's. Various are the workings of Gods Spirit in the heart, he blows when, where, how he pleases, *Joh* 3. 8. He is called *seven spirits*, *Rev.* 1. 4. because of his various influences. He doth, *Ἔστιν ποτὲ*, blow in a duty, if the ship be ready, but to shew he is *agens liberrimum*, he will sometime suspend his Act, and leave the common Road. To conclude this, take this counsel, *Stay thy self upon thy God*, Isa. 50. 10. Remembring he will send forth judgment unto victory, *Matt* 12. 20. And take this for a cordial, which is a spiritual Riddle, *It is a comfort to have no comfort*; The desires of some are as acceptable to God, as the deeds of others.

I may truly say say of it as *Keckerman* says of Mercuries motion, *Valdè varius & magna ex parte incognitus*

5. When we are enlarged, and yet we are not elated; high in Gods Spirit, low in our own spirit. True Christians are like Canes, the fuller they are of Sugar, the lower they bend. *Quanto sublimior, tanto submissior;*

missior; The loftier, the lowlier. Every true Saints Motto: True activity is not leaven to puff us up, but Lead to pull us down. What *Bede* wished some to observe of *Austine* the Monk, sent over a Legate from the pope to his Brethren the Prelates and Bishops of *England*, I may advise you to observe, that if he carried himself humbly he came from the Lord; high in duty, and humble after duty comes from the Lord. When *David* and his people had been on the Mount in their offerings to the building of the Temple, see what a low Valley they are in the opinion of themselves, 1 *Chron.* 29. 14. *Who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort?* —— For *all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.* Here is no haughty Pharisee, *Who but I?* But an humble Publican, *Who am I?*

6. When activity in duty is expressed in activity in doing; when active prayers are turned into active practises. The Emperour *Sigismund* having made fair Promises in a fore fit of sickness of amendment of life, asked *Theodericus*, Archbishop of *Collen*, how he might know, whether his repentance were sincere: Who replied, if you are as careful to perform in your health, as you are forward to promise in your sickness, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. *As new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby.* When our being high in duty makes us grow high in grace and knowledge, 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. Even as Cedars of *Lebanon*, untill (*caput inter nubila*) we lodge our heads in heaven, 2 *Pet.* 1, 10, 11. We may be sure it is from the Spirit when enlargement in duty, lays on us an engagement to duty.

Æne. Sylv. li. 2. Com. Prompciores sunt homines promittendo quam exequando. Dion. l. 38.

7. When we give God the glory of all our Actings and activities, if it be returned to his praise, it was received from his Spirit. When Rivers return to the Sea, it argues they from thence proceeded, *Eccles.* 1. 7. When *David* and his people had shewed their activity in their Present towards their erecting of the Temple, they shut up all with a most gracious and grateful Doxology, 1 *Chron* 29. 13. *Now therefore our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name* Psal. 115. 1. *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us but unto thy name give the glory.* Hodoribus *non nobis*, to lay down man, to lift up God. When we unfeignedly give God the glory, God hath undoubtedly given us the grace.

8. When we have the testimony of the Spirit witnessing with our spirit, that this activity is from himself, *Gal.* 4. 6. *God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.* When we are so enlarged in a duty that we do cry, *Abba, Father*; this the spirit witnesses is his work. The Spirit doth not witness by a clear and distinct, either outward or inward voice, *totidem verbis*, this I have wrought in thee;

thee; thus to affirm, would be a Quakers fancy, or rather folly: But the Spirit doth sweetly and secretly suggest to us by having wrought those filial affections, and child-like dispositions of Love, Joy, Peace, Hope, Fear, Grief, Confidence, *&c.* in the heart, and by enabling us to act these gracious dispositions, as need shall require. This is the Spirits συμμαρτυρῶν, witnessing with our spirits, thus fitted and filled with peace and purity, with melting and mourning; the Spirit doth by his impress and impulse ratifie and seal the witness of our own Spirit to make it authentick, *Rom.* 8. 15, 16. *You have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit it self beareth witness with our spirits*; so that having two witnesses it may be established.

1. The witness of conscience, which is *mille testes*, 2 Cor. 1. 12. *But our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our conscience.*

Cum spiritus testatur, quæ tandem restat ambiguitas? Chrys. in Rom. 8. 15.

2. The witness of the Spirit, which is more than ten thousand Witnesses, because he is infallible Witness, that cannot erre, therefore call'd *the Spirit of Truth*, 1 *Joh.* 5. 6. Now these two putting their hands to the testimonial of our activity, breed and beget that παῤῥησίαν πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν, 1 *Joh.* 3. 20. That Confidence in God, and Evidence to God, as *A. Lapide* interprets the the word. Now as those two Witnesses testimony in prophecying against Idolatrous and Superstitious Worship was sufficient to evidence all their actions were from the spirit of Antichrist, *Rev.* 11 3. So these two Witnesses testifying to our souls that these activities are legitimate and laudible, are sufficient assurance that they came from the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

Use 1. Makes an Apology for those precious souls, whose wings are so besmeared with the bird-lime of Sloth, that they are forced to put up their humble Bills to Ministers and Congregations to beg of God in their behalf spiritual quickenings; that so their hearts being enlarged, by the breathings of the Spirit, they may bowzingly sail in the ways, and through the waves of Gods commandments.

Use 2. Is an Advocate to plead Justification to the Action in the behalf of those, who as they make it a Case of Conscience, so they make Conscience of the Case to bring their Activities to the Touchstone, and to the Tryal. They know that all is not Gold that glisters, and they would not (in a thing of that eternal concernment) be deceived with Alchimy instead of Gold, with blear-eyed *Leah* instead of beautiful *Rachel*, with a Cloud instead of *Juno*, with a Pebble instead of a Pearl; and therefore they are industrious and illustrious to try, whether their Activity in duty be from the Spirit, by those spirits that are ingredients into their Activity.

Wherein

Wherein are we endangered by things lawfull?

Luke 17. 27, 28.

They did eat, they drank, they married, &c.

HEre is set down what the generality of people were doing in the world, they were brutish in the days of *Noah* before the floud came & drowned them; and in the days of *Lot* before the fire came down from Heaven and destroyed them. In *Mat. c.* 24. 38. it is expressed by participles, *they were eating*, &c. τρώγοντες, &c. this shews the vigour and activity of their spirits spent on those things in which they were ingaged, and the word τρώγοντες *proprie de brutis dici volunt Grammatici, ut etiam videatur magna esse hujus verbi emphasis, qua significatur homines brutorum instar fere ventri deditos.* Beza. This word signifieth a kind of brutish feeding themselves without fear, as it is *Jude* 12. but here in the Text the words run ἤθιον ἔπινον ἠγόραζον, &c. They are expressed by an ἀσύνδετον without a copulative, *Camerarius* observes, *hæc ita ἀσυνδέτως, petita magis notant & arguunt hominum temporis illius securitatem*: so that the vehemency, and eagerness, and intention of their spirits in the things they were implyed in is hereby noted: They were very busie, their hearts, and heads, and hands, all taken up in eating, drinking, buying, selling, *&c.* the actions named, and the comforts which they were enjoying, those natural and civil implyments in which they were ingaged, all good and lawfull in themselves, but they were not well implyed in them; the use of those things was lawfull, but they did sinfully use them: for there is in all these actions a narrow way and a broad way, *Matth.* 21. 13, 14. the narrow way which is bounded and limited, and under a rule as to the

and, 1 *Cor.* 10. 31. *viz.* the glory of God, and also to the circumstances, this there be but few that find it: but the broad way, *which* is without bounds and limits, this is the common road which most walk in. Thus far, but no further, saith God; the will of God is the boundary of the narrow way, but lust knoweth no bounds, and will not be prescribed to.

The very heathens looked at their common actions as under bounds; they had their Ἀνέχου καὶ ἀπέχου, *sustine & abstine*, ἐυμετρίαν καὶ ἀνεξιν. *Gelli. Noctes, l.* 7. *c.* 19. *Anton. Pig. l.* 4. § 3. but the difficulty lies in observing the just limits in the use of lawful things; and therefore one said well; *Licitis periimus omnes*, &c. ruine usually ariseth from the use of lawful things, there being most danger where it is least suspected. In all our comforts there is a forbidden *fruit*, which seemeth fair, and tasteth sweet, but which must not be *touched*.

The Observations may be these:

1. *That all our actions natural, in eating, &c. and civil, in buying and selling, &c. come under a rule.* This is implyed, else the Lord would not have brought those great judgments on them, barely for their eating, *&c.* had they not in those imployments transgressed *a rule*.

2. *Such are usually the miscarriages of men in the use of lawfull things, that they are the procuring causes of the most dreadfull judgments.* For we see that the Lord makes mention of these very things lawfull in themselves, as the causes of the flood on the world, and fire on *Sodom*.

3. *The Lord puts great weight and stress on these very things which we take but little or no notice of.* The old world and *Sodom*, little thought they should come to so severe a reckoning for their eating and drinking, *&c.*

To bring things to an issue as to the case concerning our danger of sin and miscarriage in lawfull things; I shall 1. inquire *when lawfull things become sin to us.* 2. *How we may judge of our hearts and selves, and discern their miscarriage and sin in the pursuing, injoyment and use of lawfull things?* 3. *What are the sins that attend the immoderate and inordinate use of lawfull things?*

As to the first I answer, *When lawfull comforts which are given us for helps, become hinderances in our way to Heaven, then they become sin to us.* When we by our abusive cleaving to the creature, by our inordinate affection to it, by our exorbitant disorderly pursuing of it, do abuse our helps, they become hinderances to us, and as it was said of *Gideons* Ephod; *Judg.* 8. 27. He made an Ephod, *which* when

when it became an Idol, became a snare. When lawful comforts are immoderately and passionately desired, pursued enjoyed, then they become an Idol and a beloved, or at least they become beloved so far as to carry it from Christ, from duty: Now when any things becomes an Idol in the heart, so as that the soul begins to bow before it and yield obedience to it, then it becomes an Idol, and what is an Idol in the heart, is a stumbling block of iniquity in our life, *Ezek.* 14.4. it is a stumbling block an hindrance in our way: such Idols in the heart, usually prove great offences, and both σκάνδαλον & πρόσκομμα, stumbling blocks and occasions of falling; the first signifies a stumbling block to keep one off from duty; such an offence *Peter* was to Christ, *Matth.* 19.23. He would have hindred him in that great work which He had to do. The second signifies a gall trap which will vex and trouble one in duty: so that when our comforts become Idols, images of jealousie in our hearts, then they are stumbling blocks, and so obstacles in our way to Heaven.

Again, when our lawful comforts by our dotage become beloveds, or greatly, passionately beloved, then they become hinderances; when your hearts inflame themselves with your comforts, as the Lord speaks of them, *Isa.* 57.5. *They inflamed themselves with their Idols*; when the heart doth inordinately love creature-comforts, they are then turned into lusts, so that of lawful comforts they are made unlawful lusts, 1 *Joh.* 2.15, 16. the things of the world, or the profits, pleasures, honours which usually mens hearts and thoughts are taken up withall, are good and lawful things in themselves, but being abused, they are called, *the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eye*, &c. The Holy Ghost puts the lust that is within us, to express the profits, pleasures and honours of the world which are without us. So that the good things of this life, by our inordinate love to them being abused, the very nature and property of the things are altered, for instead of proving good helps to us when lawfully loved and used, become lusts that hinder us, for they fight against our souls, 2 *Pet.* 2. 11. and members of the old man, and weapon in his hand to fight against God; they become one with old *Adam* in us, and therefore *Col.* 3.5. we are bid to mortifie our earthly members; he doth not say, mortifie your lusts, but members, they being all one, and make up together a body of sin, one old man, as it is called *Eph.* 4.22. Now it is certain that the old man in us, the body of sin, is an enemy and a hindrance to us in our way to Heaven.

In this case those foul sins of Idolatry and adultery are committed

with the creature, in both which sins the heart is stolen away from God, drawn away from the proper object. The Apostle useth *that* expression *Jam.* 1. 14. ἀπὸ τῆς ἰδίας ἐπιθυμίας ἐξελκόμενος, drawn away by lust, or some object, in an unlawful conjunction with the heart, then the heart comes to be glued to it, as God speaks, *Hos.* 4. 17. They are joyned to Idols, fixed to them, so that as in Idolatry the *heart* is joyned to and fixed to the Idol, so as that it will not easily part with it, as it is *Jer.* 2. 10. Has a nation changed its God, *q. d.* no they are fixed to their Gods and they will not change them. So *it is in the* sin of adultery, the heart is stollen from the proper object; as it is *Hos.* 4. 11. speaking of wine and women, it is said *they steal away the heart*, and it is glued to that which it goes awhoring after, so that it will not be taken off from it, *Prov.* 2. 9. When the creature becomes an Idol in the heart, then there is idolatry committed; *and when it is* a beloved there is adultery committed, the hope, and trust, *and* confidence of the soul is gone, the love and care, the joy and delight of the soul is gone, and the soul with every creature that it thus enjoyes powreth out her fornications, as the Lord spake of them *Ezek.* 16. 5. and as they *Isa.* 23. 17. are said *to commit fornication with all Kingdoms*, so a heart which inordinately loveth, and doteth on, and is glued to creature comforts, recommits fornication and abomination with them.

The second Inquiry was, *How we may judg of our hearts, and know when they miscarry and offend in the pursuing, use and enjoyment of lawful things?*

1. When our desire of, and our endeavours after worldly things grow strong and impatient, and very eager and impatient; as *Rachel* said, *Give me children or else I die*, Gen. 30. 1. When we begin to say, I must have such an accommodation whatever it cost me, I must have such a comfort or I am undone: such a pursuit after *worldly* comforts, argues a heart very carnal; and he that miscarries so much in seeking after the things of this world, will not mend the matter much when he comes to enjoy them: when the heart groweth sick after worldly things in the desire of them, usually it surfeteth when it gaineth it: as *Amnon* was sick for his sister, 2 *Sam.* 13. 1, 2. he had a surfet after: and as *Ahab*, 1 King. 21. 4. he was sick with impatient earnest longing for *Naboths* vineyard. When your heart is very impatient till you do obtain your desires, you are never well with that thing which you do so obtain: When the affections grow strong and warm, that you can indure no opposition or contradiction in the pursuance

ſuance of your deſires, but you can bear any trouble or hardſhip that you may obtain the things deſired, as we ſee in *Shechem*, Gen. 34. who could endure circumciſion that he might have *Dinah*; and in *Jacob*, who did indure very much that he might have *Rachel*, Gen. 29. 18. then there is a match towards, then in ſuch a caſe when it is gained, the heart becomes glued to it, and commits fornication with it, and cannot indure to be touched or thwarted in the fruition of it, as *Demetrius* and the Silver-ſmiths, when they found their *Diana* began to be touched by *Pauls* doctrine, *Acts* 19. 24, 25, *&c.* they made an uproar, they would not endure that. When ye look on any thing with a greedy and impatient, longing, luſting eye, that, if you do obtain it (if God doth not otherwiſe order it) will prove a ſnare to you, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *Pſal.* 69. 22. an Idol, an image of jealouſie, a curſe and a croſs.

2 When you have raiſed expectations and hopes of great contentment and ſatisfaction from your comforts: when you promiſe to your ſelves greater matters from the creature than it can yield, then you miſcarry when you look on the creature through the multiplying glaſs of your affections and luſts, and ſee them as they are ſo repreſented bigger and better than they are, and from thence you have high valuation of them, and raiſed expectations alſo of great things from them: when we fancy an excellency in the creature that is not, we fancy a fullneſs in an empty thing, a ſatisfaction in an inſufficient, unſatisfying comfort, we fancy a ſtability in a vain, fleeting, vaniſhing thing: when we fancy a fountain excellency in a broken ciſtern, as they did *Jer.* 2. 13. then upon this the heart is raiſed to great expectations of pleaſure, profit, *&c.* then the heart ſhamefully miſcarries, and as it is ſaid *Rev.* 13. 3, 4 there is a ſtrange beaſt that turned the eyes of all the world after it; they looked with an eye of great expectation from this beaſt, and then they wondred and adored alſo; ſo that they looked with an eye of admiration and adoration too.

3. When the obedience and willing ſubmiſſion of the ſoul is brought off to any worldly comfort, and the ſoul ſtoops to its ſcepter, and the faculties like the Centurions ſervants do as they are bid, ſuch comforts which are ſlaviſhly obeyed are ſinfully enjoyed. When we are afraid to diſpleaſe them the fear is at command, when we are careful to pleaſe ſuch a luſt, then the care is under ſubjection; when we are troubled if croſſed, then our ſorrow is at command; if rejoyced when that is gratified, then the love and delight of the ſoul

are

are at command; *And his servants, ye are to whom ye obey*, Rom. 6. 16. When the soul is even as the servant that looks to the hand of the Master with an obediential eye, *Psal.* 123. 2. expecting a command, and ready to yield obedience, such a comfort is a sin and a curse to you. Christ calls to us to deny our selves, *Matth.* 16. 24. Profits, pleasures, carnal advantages say, rather deny Christs command. Who is obeyed? Christ saith *mortifie your lusts*; lust saith gratifie us, consider who is obeyed? If family duties, and personal private duties; if praying, holy meditation, secret close communion with God be neglected, because multitude of worldly business and full and great Trade in the world commands you another way, and requires the love, and zeal, and strength, and care of the heart to another attendance, then you are under another Sovereign than Christ. The obedience of the heart is carried to another Law, *other Lords rule over you*. Now the soul that is under the command of the creature, as I have shewed, that comfort becomes a sin which usurps the throne of the heart.

4. When the soul groweth very tender and compassionate towards such a comfort, and begins to spare that above other things, then that becomes a lust, and lust is very tender and delicate, and must be tenderly used: sight eyes are very tender, the least touch fetcheth tears; when thou canst not endure that either the Word of God, or the Rod of God should come too near, or so much as touch upon such a carnal contentment, such a comfort, such a Husband, such a Wife or Child, thou canst not endure that the Lord should smite thee in any of these: but thou cryest out, *Oh spare this*, as *David* concerning his *Absalom*, 2 Sam. 18. 4, 5. *Oh tender the young man, pray deal gently with him*; and as old *Jacob* with his *Benjamin*, *He could more easily spare his other children than him, he looked with a very tender compassionate eye on him*. What ever thou dost enjoy with such a tender bleeding heart and eye, it hath ravished thy heart very far, and it is become thy Idol, and beloved very far, and thy sin.

5. When the care, anxiety, and solicitude of the soul runs out after the comforts of this life, saying, what shall I eat, what shall I drink, how shall I live and maintain my Wife and Children, what shall I do to get, to keep such or such a thing? when the thoughts of the heart are taken up for protection, for provision, to get and hold the things of this life; such comforts as are so gotten, and so enjoyed, they are sinfully obtained and maintained, and this our Lord

Lord Christ doth clear to us, *Mat.* 6. 25, 26. And he warns his Disciples in a special manner against all such cares, *Luk.* 22. 34. μεριμνᾶτε μὴ γνῶτε.

6. That comfort which thou art not dead unto, neither is that dead to thee, thou wilt hardly enjoy with safety to thy self, or thou wilt part withall but upon severe terms.

If when God by his providence calls for such or such a comfort, Husband, Wife, Child, yet thou canst not, you will not resign and give up that comfort at Gods call; but thou growest impatient and sullen, when he doth but attempt to bereave the of it: God may perhaps let thee have thy lust, as he dealt with the *Israelites*, Psal. 78. 18, 30. but thou shalt have that comfort without any comfort, it may be wieh a curse:

When we cannot bear the thoughts of either absence or loss of such or such things, cannot endure the thought of parting: it is like the tearing off a limb from the body, when God takes away such a Husband, or Wife, or Child, or Estate, *&c.* It argues that they were greatly abused while we had them. If there were an indifferency of spirit in us, as the Apostle saith, 1 *Cor.* 7. 29, 30, &c. That they that were married, were as if they were not married, *&c.* they would part upon easier terms by far. When the life is bound up in a comfort, it is death to part, *Gen.* 44. 22, 30. as it was with *Jacob* to his *Benjamin*. When the creature had got too great an interest in thee, that thou canst by no means bring thy heart to think of leaving it, or its leaving thee, though God seems to call for it, the heart begins secretly to rise up against God, and to murmur and quarrell at providence, this argueth a very carnal heart. If the heart did hang loose from these things, thou mightest enjoy them with more comfort, and part them with more ease.

7. If after God hath been weaning us in a more special manner by his Word and Rod, and taking off our hearts from our worldly comforts, yet the strong bent of the soul is towards them; it argues much carnal love to them, that we are not crucified to those comforts.

When the soul hath its secret sinfull converse and fellowship with a creature-comfort, against its own conviction to the contrary; it may be thou hast repented, or at least hast seemed to repent of such a way and course, yet for all this, thy heart continually hangs that way: and as it is, *Prov.* 9. 17. Her *stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant*, when a stoln glance of the eye, a stoln kiss from

from a luſtful object is ſtill pleaſant to the ſoul, there is much of a meretricious carriage in that heart, it is ſo far ſinfully enjoyed.

When the heart hankers much after ſuch a thing, it is ſtoln away, *Hoſ.* 4. 11. when it hangs after it, as it is *Jer.* 22, 17. Their hearts went after their covetouſneſs: when the heart hath its ſecret haunts and poſtern doors to get out to ſuch or ſuch an object, and that object hath its ſecret paſſage to the ſoul. There be ſome ſecret correſpondencies betwixt the heart and the object, when the luſtfull object hath its welcome, it no ſooner knocks but it is admitted; when it hath a free paſſage into the heart, and the heart hangs after it, nay, perhaps admits it when it is in duty, if it comes even when we are with God in prayer and is admitted, it argues a ſinfull whoriſh familiarity.

8. If after ſolemn and frequent warnings, invitations and earneſt beſeechings, perhaps corrections too, God calls thee to a more ſtrict and cloſe walking with him in a ſeverer way of ſelf-denyal, in a more free and full enjoyment of himſelf; if God would ſequeſter thee from thy Oxen, Farm, married Wife, that he might have thee more alone from the croud, and duſt, and tumult of the world; if yet after all this, thou then ſetteſt thy wits on work to frame excuſes: If Chriſt ſpeak to thee as he did to his Spouſe, *Cant.* 7. 11. *Come let us go and lodge in the villages*; Come let us go out of the City crowd and multiplicity of worldly buſineſſes, and let us retire alone that we may more fully enjoy one another. If he ſaith to thee as *verſ.* 12. he ſpeaks to his Spouſe, *Let us get up early to the vineyard*, &c. and calls thee off to a more early, earneſt, diligent attendance on him, *and thou doeſt* as the Spouſe, *Cant.* 5. 2, 3. makeſt lazy excuſes, for thy eaſie gainfull trade and way of life thou leadeſt; if ſo it be with thee, thou keepeſt thy comforts upon ſinfull terms.

When the Arguments, and pleas, and excuſes, and pretexts are for luſt, when denials, equivocations, and thy reaſon are all at work for luſt. When God calls to ſelf-denyal in ſome creature-comfort, and then the heart forms excuſes for the enjoyment of it, as they in the Goſpel, they all began to make excuſes, when they were call'd to the Wedding Supper, their lawfull comforts became a ſnare and ſin to them, *Luke* 14. 16, 17. If thy heart in ſuch a caſe ſtudies colours to adorn or ſet it out, or ſet it off, or covers to protect it, then it is ſinfull; the heart miſcarries in the enjoyment of its comforts, when it ſtudies how to hide it ſelf in the enjoyment of it as much as may be even from the eye of God.

The

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The third thing propounded was, *What are the sins that attend the immoderate sinful use or abuse of lawful comforts?*

I will confine my self to the sins in the Text: The first sin in their eating and drinking, *&c.* was sensuality, and that is expressed by the word τρωγόντες, which as I have shewed, is properly applied to bruits, an eating after a bruitish manner, and by the ἀσυνθέτον, which notes the vehemency and intention of their spirits, laid out in their sensual injoyments, men are apt (especially in abundance) to grow sensual and bruitish, to use their comforts without fear, to indulge themselves very farre, and so say to themselves as the Rich Glutton, *Soul take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry*, Luk. 12. 19. a sensual bruitish speech, fitter for a Swine than a man; abundance of the things of this life hath a strange vertue to corrupt a man into a bruit. *Deut.* 32. 15 *Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked.* How is he degenerated to a fat Heifer or Horse, that kicks and winseth? The Lord complains *Jer.* 5, 7, 8. that *when he fed them to the full they committed adultery*, &c. and were like *fed Horses* bruitish and sensual: such as gratifie their lusts in eating, *&c.* are strong Bulls of *Bashan*, Psal. 22. 12. the Psalmist sayes, he was compassed about with them who were like Bulls in a fat pasture, well fed and strong, and ready to gore and push: the great, and rich, and potent ones, are compared to these bruits: We are very apt in the midst of comforts to grow sensual, and before we are aware, as *Noah* and *Lot* who both were overtaken: Our Lord Christ *Luk.* 11. 34. exhorts his Disciples against these, and bids them to beware, the word notes a very diligent and intent study and intention of mind to what he said, least their heart should be overcharged; it seems strange that he should give the Disciples an exhortation against sensuality and bruitish sins, but that he knew their natures, and though they were most temperate persons, yet he bids them *beware of surfeiting*, knowing that if the best did not watch, they might be overtaken with sensuality.

2. Pride, ease and idleness usually go together, the immoderate or inordinate use of the creature, this was it which God warned his people of, *Deut.* 8. 11, 12, 14. *take heed when thou art full*, &c. *lest thy heart be lifted up.* So *Psal.* 123. 4. there 'tis said *his soul was filled with the scorning of those that are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud:* they are put together, When we fall to eating and drinking, the next thing is to take our ease, *Luk.* 12. 19.

So the Lord speaks *Hos.* 13. 6. *According to their pastures so were they filled, and their heart was exalted, and they have forgotten me.*

Eaſe and Idleneſs attend ſenſuality, theſe gratifie a brutiſh diſpoſition very much, fulneſs of bread and abundance of idleneſs were *Sodoms* ſins, *Ezek.* 16.49. And the rich glutton ſang a Requiem to his ſoul, uſually when men abound in outward comforts they are moſt apt to grow lethargick and ſlothful, or at leaſt they will not take much pains, it may be they will be doing ſomething but they will not be at much pains eſpecially as to their ſouls, *Hoſ.* 10. 11. *Ephraim is a Heifer that loveth to tread out the Corn*, &c. but not to plow, he cares not for that, they were wont to uſe Beaſts in treading their Corn inſtead of threſhing of it, now it was Gods command that the Oxe that trod out the Corn ſhould not be muzled but that he might eat as he did work.

Then here is *Ephraim* at a good lazy work that hath meat in the mouth of it, wages for work, and preſent pay, here is Corn, he abounds in outward things; and though he treads out the Corn, he will not plow, that is too hard labour, he will not go abroad in the wet and cold, and ſeems to have reference to thoſe of the Tribes that would not go to *Jeruſalem* to worſhip, they would not take ſo much pains: *Ephraim* conſiders his eaſe, he loves no hard work, *Ephraim* did abound and grew rich, *Hoſ.* 12. 7, 8. He drave a great trade in the world and took pains, but yet it was in a way that might gratifie his luſt and carry on his gain, but what ſaith God to this temper, ſee *Hoſ.* 10. 11. The Lord ſaith he will paſs upon his fair neck, I'le make *Ephraim* to ride: He had a fair and a beautiful neck, he led ſuch a life, that though he trod out the Corn, he lived in pleanty, eaſe, and idleneſs, no yoke came on his neck, he would not abide a yoke to be put on, but by his lazy life and good trade he had a beautiful neck, he became tender and delicate: but I'le paſs over his fair neck (as ſome take it) I'le cauſe a heavy yoke to come over his neck. and will make him work and ſet him to hard labour, I'le make him a drudge. I'le make him ride, ſome take it for their ſpeedy captivity that ſhall tame him, by his plenty and eaſe he is grown ſo luſty, like a reſtive Jade, I'le ride him; I'le ſet ſome on his back ſhalt ride him off his legs, and *Verſe* 12. *Jacob ſhall break the clods*, the ten Trihes, this is a baſe drudging work to break the clods, but this ſervile work ſhall be his. We ſee in *Laodicea* their plenty and idleneſs (*Rev*, 16. 17.) went together, and they were to be Spewed out.

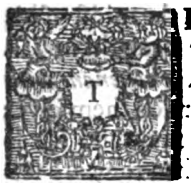
3. Then there is ſecurity follows this eating, &c. and uſually where there is abundance of theſe, and that men are much taken up with

with theſe, there is a ſecure ſleepy forgetful ſpirit goes with them: and doubtleſs this was the ſin of the old world, that though *Noah* was a Preacher of righteouſneſs, and his making the Ark was a publick alarm to the world, yet they went on in their way, eating and drinking, *&c.* very ſecurely, promiſing to themſelves peace and ſafety. Such as are filled with what they eat and drink, are apt to drop aſleep, and then they are ſecure, they apprehend themſelves ſafe from danger; they are compared to a drunken man, that doth not know in what condition he is, in 2 *Tim.* 2. 6. ἀνανήψωσιν, the word is to return to ones ſelf after drunkenneſs, that they may awaken: for it ſignifies one that is ſecure, and ſo goes on in his way, when he returns and recovers himſelf, he is as a man that was drunk; and awakes and returns to himſelf: whence it is that God did ſo often caution his people againſt a ſecure ſleepy forgetful frame of ſpirit: and when the Lord was to bring the children of *Iſrael* into *Canaan*, he ſtill bids them they ſhould not forget him, *Deut.* 6 *c.* 8. *v.* 14. but this ſin he complains of in them, *Hoſ.* 2. 13. When *David* was in the midſt of his comforts he grew ſecure, *Pſal.* 30. 6. We find ſome brought in *Iſa.* 28. 15. ſpeaking in their thoughts that they had *made a covenant with death & hell*, &c. they in their ſecure thoughts apprehended themſelves free from danger, ſuch thoughts ever carry impenitency and hardneſs of heart with them, *Zeph.* 1. 12. *Jer.* 48. 11. when they are ſetled on their lees, they never conſider or ſay *what have I done?* Jer. 8. 6. Incogitancy and ſecurity go together, a ſecure perſon never conſiders his own eſtate, danger nor duty: When once a man grows ſleepy, promiſing to himſelf freedome from danger and good days, then he falls into ſome ſin or other, or ſome evil falls upon him, *Mat.* 24. 48. 50. The evil ſervant ſaid his Maſter delayed his coming, and *Ver.* 49. He began to beat his fellow ſervant. 1. He is ſecure, he promiſeth to himſelf ſafety, his Maſter delays, *&c.* 2. He falls to beat his fellow-ſervant: Or elſe they fall into ſome ſin, *Mat.* 25. 5, 8. while they ſlept their Lamps went out, or ſome evil befalls them, *Luke* 19. *Sudden deſtruction*, 1 Theſ. 5. 3. when men grow ſecure as to their ſtate, and of a ſupine ſleepy careleſs ſpirit, ſuch are ever in a moſt unſafe, ſinful condition nigh to curſing, and on the very brink of ruine and utter deſtruction.

How muſt we make Religion our buſineſs?

Luke 2. 49.

Wiſt ye not that I muſt be about my Fathers buſineſs.



These are the words of our Lord Jeſus whoſe lips dropped as an hony-comb; the occaſion was this; Chriſt having the ſpirit of wiſdom and ſanctity powred on him without meaſure, being but twelve years old, goes to the Temple, and fell a diſputing with the Doctors, *verſe* 46. where ſhould Learning bloſſom but upon that Tree which did bear ſeveral ſorts of fruit; Who could better interpret ſecrets, than he who lay in his Fathers boſom? *all that heard him were aſtoniſhed at his understanding*, verſ. 47. *In the* Greek it is ἐξίστανται, they were *out of themſelves* with admiration: well might they admire, that he who never had been at the Univerſity ſhould be able to ſilence the great Rabbies; *John* 7. 15. *How knoweth this man letters having never learned?* while they were wondring, his Mother (who now was come to ſeek him,) propounds this queſtion, *Son why haſt thou thus dealt with us?* verſ. 48. that is, why haſt thou put us to all this labour in ſeeking thee? in the words of the Text Chriſt makes a rational and religious reply, *Wiſt ye not that I muſt be about my Fathers buſineſs?* in the Greek it is ἐν τοῖς τοῦ πατρός μου, *in the things of my Father.* As if Chriſt had ſaid, I muſt be doing the work which my Father in Heaven hath ſet me about, for this I received my miſſion and unction, that I might do the will of him that ſent me; what am I in the World for, but to promote his glory, propagate his truth, and be as a load-Star to draw ſouls to Heaven? *Wiſt ye not that I muſt be about my Fathers buſineſs.*

Col. 2. 9.

Uſque ad ſtuporem perculſs. Budæus.

Minime objurgans, ſed rem fideuter & modeſtè quærens. Bugenſis.

John 5. 4.

From

From this example of our blessed Saviour in making his Fathers work *his business*, we learn this great Truth,

That it is the duty of every Christian to make Religion his business. *Doctr.*

Religion is not a παρεργον or thing by the bye, proper only for spare hours, but it must be the grand business of our lives; St. *Paul* made it so, his great care was to *know* Christ, and to be *found* in Christ, *Phil.* 3. 9, 10. how abundantly did he lay out himself for God, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. περισσοτερον εκοπιασα, *I laboured more aboundantly than they all*, &c. Saint *Paul* moved heavenward, not slowly as the Sun on the Dial, but as the Sun in its hemisphere with a winged swiftness; he made Religion his business.

For the illustrating and unfolding of this, there are three Questions to be resolved.

1. What is meant by Religion.
2. Why we must make Religion our business.
3. What it is to make Religion our business.

1. What is meant by Religion? I answer, the Latine word *religio* *quasi religatio*, it signifies *a knitting together*; sin hath loosned us from God, but when Religion comes unto the heart, it doth *religare*, fasten the heart to God again; as the members are knit to the head by several nerves and ligaments: Religion is the spiritual sinew and ligament that knits us to God. The Greek word for Religion θεοσεβια *, signifies *a right worshipping*. This is Religion, when we not only worship the true God, but in that manner which he hath prescribed; by a right rule, from a right principle, to a right end. *Quest.* 1. *Lact. de vera sap. l. 4 us. div. instit.* * Ab εὖ, & σέβομαι.

2. The second Question is, Why we must make Religion our business? I answer, Because Religion is a matter of the highest nature; while we are serving God we are doing Angels work: the business of Religion doth infinitely out-ballance all things besides; pleasure, profit, honour, (the Trinity which the world adores) are all of an inferior alloy, and must give way to Religion. The fear of God is said to be *the whole duty of man*, Eccles. 12. 13. or as it is in the Hebrew כל האדם *the whole of man*: other things may delight, Religion doth satiate; other things may make us wise to *admiration*, Religion makes us *wise to salvation*, 2 Tim. 3. 15. *Quest.* 2.

3. The third Question is, What it is to make Religion our business? I answer: It consists principally in these seven things. *Quest.* 3.

1. We make Religion our business, when we wholly devote our selves to Religion: *Psal.* 119. 38. *Stablish thy word unto thy servant*

who

who is devoted to thy fear; as a Scholar who devotes himself to his studies makes Learning his business: a godly man may sometimes run himself through precipitancy, and incogitancy upon that which is evil; there's no man so bad but he may do some good actions, and there's no man so good but he may do some bad actions, but the course and tenour of a Godly mans Life is Religious; when he doth deviate to sinne, yet he doth devote himself to God. 'Tis with a Christian as it is with a company of mariners at sea, they are bound for such a coast, now while they are sailing they may meet with such a cross wind as may turn them back and drive them a quite contrary way, but as soon as the storm is over, and the sea calm, they recover themselves again, and get into the right way where they sailed before; so it is with a Christian, Heaven is the haven he is bound for, the Scripture is the compass he sails by, yet a contrary wind of tentation blowing, he may be driven back into a sinful action, but he recovers himself again by repentance, and sails on constantly to the heavenly Port. This is to make Religion our business, when notwithstanding some excursions through humane frailty, we are *devoted to Gods fear*, and dedicate our selves to God.

Isa. 5. 20.

2. We make Religion our business, when we intend the business of Religion *chiefly*; it doth *principatum obtinere*; Matth. 6. 33. *Seek ye first the Kingdome of God.* First, in *time* before all things, and first, in *affection*, above all things. We must give Religion the precedency, making all other things either *subservient*, or *subordinate* to it. We are to provide for our Families, but *chiefly* for our souls, this is to make Religion our business, *Jacob* put the cattel before, and made his wives and children lag after, *Gen.* 32. 16. 'Tis unworthy to make Religion come behind in the rear, it must lead the van, and all other things must stoop and vail to it: he never had Religion in his heart, who saith to any wordly thing, *in the throne thou shalt be greater.*

Si Christus prote de cœlesti sede descendit, tu propter ipsam fuge terram. Aug.

3. We make Religion our business, when our thoughts are most busied about Religion: while others are thinking how they *shall* do to get a living, our thoughts are, how we shall do to be saved. *David* did muse upon God, *Psal.* 139. 3. *While I was musing the fire burned.* Thoughts are as passengers in the soul, when we travel every day to the City of God, and are contemplating glory and eternity, this is to make Religion our business. *Theophilact* calls holy contemplation, the gate and portal by which we enter into Heaven; a Christian

Ἡ θεωρία τῶν θείων ἐστὶν αὐτὴ γὰρ πέφυκε τὴν εἴσοδον τοῦ θεοῦ. Theoph.

stian by divine soliloquies, and ejaculations, is in Heaven before his time; he is wraped up into Paradise, his thoughts are all pack'd up and gone.

4. We make Religion our business, when our main end, and scope is to serve God: he is said to make the World his business, whose great design is to get the World. St. *Pauls* ultimate end was, that Christ might be *magnified*, and the Church *edified*: our aimes must be good as as well as our actions. Many make use of Religion for sinister ends; like the Eagle while she flies aloft her eye is upon her prey: Hypocrites serve God *propter aliud*; they love the *Temple* for the *gold*, they court the Gospel, not for its beauty, but for its Jewels: these do not make Religion their business, but a politick trick, and artifice to get money; but when we make Religion our business, when the glory of God is mainly in our eye, and the very purport and intent of our life is, *to live to him who hath died for us* 2 *Cor.* 5. 15. God is the *center*, and all the lines of our actions must be drawn to this center.

Phil. 1. 20. 2 Cor. 12. 19. Mat. 23. 17. μᾶλλον πρᾶξις ἐν μεχιρσῶ ἔχει τὸ κέρδος. Chrys.

5. We make Religion our business, when we do trade with God every day. *Phil.* 3. 20. *Our conversation is in Heaven.* The Greek Word for *conversation* πολίτευμα, signifies commerce and traffique: our merchandize is in Heaven: a man may live in one place, and drive his trade in another: a Saint though he lives in the world, yet he trades above the Moon, he is a merchant for the Pearl of price. This is to make Religion our business, when we keep an holy intercourse with God, there's a trade driven between us and Heaven, 1 *John* 1. 3. *Our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus*; God comes down to us upon the wing of his Spirit, and we go up to him upon the wing prayer.

Ut municipes cœlorum nos gerimus.

6. We make Religion our business, when we redeem time from secular things for the service of God: a good Christian is the greatest monopolizer, he doth hoard up all the time he can for Religion, *Psal.* 119. 62. *at midnight will I rise and praise thee.* Those are the best hours which are spent with God, and *David* having tasted how sweet the Lord was, would borrow some time from his sleep, that he might take a turn in Heaven. It well becomes Christians to take time from wordly occasions, sinful dressings, idle visits, that they may be the more intent upon the matters of Religion. I have read of an holy man, who being tempted by his former evil companions to sin, he made this answer, I am so busie in reading in a little book with three leaves, that I have no leisure so much as to mind my other

other buſineſs; and being asked afterward, whether he had read over the book, replyed, this book with three leaves are of three ſeveral colours, red, white, and black, which contain ſuch deep miſteries, that I have reſolved with my ſelf to read therein all the days of my life; in the firſt leaf which is *red*, I meditate on the pretious bloud of Chriſt which was ſhed for my ſins; in the *white* leaf I meditate on pure and delitious joyes of Heaven; in the *black* leaf I contemplate the hideous and dreadful torments of Hell, prepared for the wicked to all eternity. This is to make Religion our buſineſs, when we are ſo taken up with it, that we have ſcarce any leiſure for other things. Chriſtian, thou haſt a God to ſerve, and a ſoul to ſave, and if thou haſt any thing of Religion in thee, thou wilt take heed of the *thieves of time*, and wilt engroſs *all* opportunities for the beſt things. How far are they from *Chriſtianity*, who juſtle out holy duties, inſtead of borrowing time from the world for prayer, they ſteal time from prayer that they may follow the world.

7. We make Religion our buſineſs, when we ſerve God with all our might: our ſtrength and ſpirits are drawn forth about Religion; we *ſeek*, *ſweat*, *ſtrive*, beſtir our ſelves as in a matter of life and death, and put forth not only *diligence*, but *violence*, 2 Sam. 6. 14. *David danced before the Lord with all his might*: This is to make Religion our buſineſs, when we ſhake off ſloth, and put on zeal as a garment. We muſt not only pray, but pray *fervently*, Jam. 5. 16. we muſt not only repent but *be zealous* and repent, *Rev.* 3. 9. we muſt not only love, but *be ſick of love*, Cant. 2. 5.

Horat. ——*multa tulit, ſudavit, & alſit.*——

This is to be a Chriſtian to purpoſe, when we put forth all our vi-
Mat. 12. 11. gour and fervour in Religion, and take the Kingdom of God as it were by ſtorm. 'Tis not a faint velleity will bring us to Heaven, there muſt not only be *wiſhing* but *working*, and we muſt ſo work, as being damned if we come ſhort.

Uſe 1. *Uſe* 1. Information.

Information Branch. 1. 1. *Branch.* Hence learn, that there are but few good Chriſtians; oh how few make Religion their buſineſs! is he an Artificer that never wrought in the trade? is he a Chriſtian that never wrought in the trade of Godlineſs? How few make Religion their buſineſs!

1. Some make *Religion* a *compliment*, but not their buſineſs; they court Religion by a *profeſſion*, and if need be Religion *ſhall* have their letters of commendation, but they do not make Religion their

their business. Many of Christs Disciples who said, *Lord evermore give us this bread*, yet soon after basely deserted Christ, and would follow him no longer. *John* 6. 66. *From that time many of his Disciples went back, and walked no more with him.* John 6. 34.

2. Others make the *world* their business, *Phil.* 3. 19. *Who mind earthly things.* The earth puts out the fire: So the love of earthly things puts out the fire of heavenly affections. It was a judgement upon *Korah* and *Dathan*, Numb. 16. 22. the earth *swallowed them up.* Thus it is with many; the world swallows up their time, thoughts, discourse; they are swallowed up alive in the earth. There is a lawful use of these things, but the sin is in the *excess.* The Bee may suck a little honey from the leaf, but put it in a Barrel of honey, and it is drown'd. How many ingulph themselves in the creature, and drive such a Trade in the Shop, that they quite break in their Trading for Heaven. The Farm and Oxen have kept millions from Christ. These do not make Religion their business, but make the world their business; and what will all be at death, but as a dream, or fancy? Hab. 2. 13. *The people shall labour in the fire, and weary themselves for very vanity.* σκιὰ γὰρ ἐσμεν, καὶ σκιὰν διώκομεν καὶ ματαιότης.

2. *Branch.* Hence see how hard it is to be saved! 'Tis not so easie as some apprehend, *Religion must be our business.* 'Tis not enough to have a smack of Religion, a touch and away, *Canis ad nilum*----but we must make it our τὸ ἔργον, *our business.* How many precepts have we to obey, how many tentations to resist, how many graces to treasure up? Religion is the work of our whole lives, and all little enough; Lord then how hard is it to be saved? *Where will the sinner appear?* What will become of the Gallants of our times, who make *sin* their business, whose whole imployment is to indulge and pamper the flesh? φιλήδονοι μᾶλλον ἢ φιλόθεοι. All their care is (as *Hierom* speaks) to crisp their hair, to sparkle their Diamonds; in stead of steeping their souls in brinish tears, they bathe themselves in perfumed waters, and ride to Hell upon the back of pleasure. 2. *Branch.* *Quibus cura est ut vestes bene oleant, ut digite annulis radient, ut crines calamistro retententur.* Hier.

Use 2. Let us deal impartially with our own souls, and put our selves upon a strict trial before the Lord, whether we make Religion our business? And for our better progress herein, I shall lay down ten Signs and Characters of a man that makes Religion his business, and by these, as by a Gospel-Touchstone, we may try our selves. *Use* 2. *Trial.*

1. He who makes Religion his business, doth not place his Religion only in externals. *Rom.* 2. 28. *He is not a Jew who is one outwardly.* 1. *Charact.*

ἀν πὰ φαινόμ. *wardly.* Religion doth not stand only in forms and shadows; this is to give God leaves instead of fruit. 'Tis often seen, that the *pomp* of worship destroys the *purity*, as the paint of Glass hinders the light: And 'tis no untruth to say, that formality may as well damn as prophaneness. A superstitious *Pharisee* may as well be in Hell as a drunken Epicure. A Christians main work lies with his heart. He that makes Religion his business, gives God the *Vitals*, he worships him *in spirit and in truth*, *John* 4. 24. In stilling the *spirits* are strongest. The good Christian distils out the spirits for God. *Aaron* must offer the fat upon the Altar, *He shall offer an offering made by fire, the fat that covereth the inwards.* Vers. 16. *All the fat is the Lords.* If *Aaron* had offered the skin instead of the fat, it would not have been accepted. External devotion alone, is offering the skin; and they that give God only the skin of duty, shall carry away only the shell of comfort.

2. *Charact.* 2 *Character.* He who makes Religion his business, avoids every thing that may be a *remora* and hindrance to him in his work. A wicked man cares not whether the matter of Religion goes forward or backward; he stands in the way of tentation; and as if sin did not come fast enough, he *draws it as with a Cart-rope*, Isa. 5. 18. But he who makes Religion his business, flies from tentation, and while he is running the heavenly race, *lays aside every weight of sin which doth so easily beset him.* Heb. 12. 1. A man may as well miss of Heaven by loytering in the way, as by losing the way, 1 *Sam.* 21. 8. *The Kings business required haste*; so the business of Religion requires haste; therefore the good Christian is careful that he be not taken off the work, and so be taken tardy in it.

Isa. 5. 18.

3. *Charact.* 3. *Character.* He who makes Religion his business, hath a care to preserve conscience inviolable, and had rather offend all the world than offend his conscience, 2 *Tim.* 1. 3. *I thank God whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience.* Much of Religion lies in conscience. Faith is a precious Jewel, but Conscience is the Cabinet where this Jewel must be kept, 1 *Tim.* 3. 9. *Holding the mystery of faith in a pure conscience.* Love is a beautiful flower, but this flower most grows in the garden of a pure conscience, 1 *Tim.* 1. 5. *Charity out of a pure conscience.* So sacred a thing is conscience; without this all Religion drops in pieces. He who makes Religion his business, labours to get conscience regulated by Scripture, (as the Watch is set by the Dial) and having done this, he keeps his conscience as his *eye*, that no dust of sin fall into it.

O felix conscientiæ Paradisus, bonorum operum virgultis consita, variisque virtutum floribus purpurata. Aug. *ad fratr. in eremo, Tom.* 10.

4. *Character*

4. *Character.* He who makes Religion his business, Religion hath an influence upon all his civil actions. 4. *Character.*

1. Religion hath an influence upon his *eating and drinking*; he holds the golden bridle of temperance, he eats sparingly. The godly man feeds not to please the sensual appetite, but that he may (as *Chrysostome* saith) by the strength he receives from the creature μᾶλλον ἐν τῇ πνευματικῶν ἐργασίᾳ σπουδὴν ἐπιδείκνυσθαι, be the more fit for the chearful discharge of spiritual services: He makes not his food fuel for lust, but help to duty. Epicures dig their own grave with their teeth; they *feed without fear*, Jude vers. 12. *Irregulares gulares.* Sinners fear not lest their *Table should be a snare*; they fear not the *proceß of justice*; while the Wine is in the Cup, they fear not the *hand-writing on the Wall.* But the godly man being regulated by Religion, *puts a Knife to his throat*, Prov. 23. 2. that he may cut the throat of intemperance. ἀνδρὸς ἀφέτου κατὰ τὸν λάρυγγα τὴν μάχαιραν ἐπιτίθησι. Chrysost. Psal. 69. 22

2. He that makes Religion his business, Religion hath an influence upon his *recreation.* The strings of the Viol must sometimes be slackned lest they break; *Neque semper arcum tendit Apollo*---God affords his people generous delights; the Scripture allows the use of the Bow, 2 *Sam.* 1. 18. But we are apt to offend most in lawful things; more are killed with Wine than with poyson. Religion sits Moderator in the soul. The man influenced by Religion dares not make *play* an *occupation*; 'tis oyl to quicken him in Gods service, not a Sea to ingulph him. He who is devoted to Religion, puts bounds to the *Olympian* sports; he knows where to make his stops and periods; he sets up an *Herculis Columna*, on which he writes, *non ultra, no further than this.*

3. He that makes Religion his business, Religion hath an influence upon his *buying and selling.* The wicked get a livelihood often by cozening; sometimes they *embase* commodities, *Amos* 8. 6. *They sell the refuse of the Wheat.* They would pick out the best grains of Corn, and then sell the rest; sometimes they *falsifie* their weights, *Hos.* 12. 7. *He is a Merchant, the ballances of deceit are in his hand.* But he who makes Religion his business, is regulated by it in the Shop; he is just in his dealings; he dares not hold the Book of God in one hand, and false weights in the other; he is faithful to his neighbour, and makes as much reckoning of the *ten Commandments*, as of his *Creed.*

4. Religion hath an influence upon his *marrying.* He labours to graft upon a religious stock; he is not so ambitious of *parentage* as

* χὰν γυναῖκα piety; nor is his care so much to espouse dowry as virtue*: In a word, he seeks for a *meet help*, one that may help him up the hill to Heaven: this is marrying *in the Lord*. That marriage indeed is *honourable* 2, when the husband is joyned to one who is the *Temple of the holy Ghost*, 1 Cor. 6. 19. Here is the man that makes Religion his business, who in all his civil transactions is steered, and influenced by Religion: Religion is the universal ingredient.

ἀγόμεθα μὴ χρημάτων τινὰ ἰσχὺν μηδὲ πλούτου πατρῴαν ἀλλὰ τέκνων ἀρετὴν λαμβάνομεν καὶ ὁσιότητα. Chryl.

a Heb. 13. 6

5. He who makes Religion his business, is good in his calling and relation; relative grace doth much grace Religion; I *shall suspect* his goodness who herein is excentrical: some will pray and discourse well, but it appears they never made Religion their business, but took it up rather *for ostentation* than as an *occupation*, because they are defective in relative duties; they are bad husbands, bad children, *&c. If one* should draw a picture, and leave out the eye, it would *much eclipse* and take from the beauty of the picture: to fail in a relation, stains the honour of profession. He who makes Religion his business, is like a Star shining in the proper orbe, and station wherein God hath set him.

5. *Charact.*

6. He who makes Religion his business, hath a care of his company, he dares not twist into a cord of friendship with sinners, *Psal.* 26. 4. *I have not sat with vain persons*: Diamonds will not cement with rubbish. 'Tis dangerous to intermingle with the wicked, lest their breath prove infectious: Sin is very catching, *Psal.* 106. 35, 36. *They were mingled among the Heathen, and learned their works, and served their Idols, which were a snare unto them.* Ἀναγκὴ ἢ καθεῖν, ἢ μαθεῖν τι κακόν: if you mingle bright and rusty armour together, the rusty will not be made bright, but the bright will be made rusty. He who makes Religion his business, likes not to be near them, whose nearness sets him further off from God, and whose imbraces, like those of the Spider, are to suck out the precious life. The godly man ingrafts into the *communion of Saints*, and hereby, as the Stem he partakes of the sap, and virtue of their grace: he who makes it his business to get to Heaven, associates only with those who may make him better, or whom he may make better.

6. *Charact.*

Epictetus.

7. He who makes Religion his business keeps his spiritual watch always by him. 1. He watcheth his *eye*, Job. 31. 1. *I have made a covenant with mine eyes.* When *Dinah* was *gadding* she was defiled, *Gen.* 34. 1. When the eye is gadding by impure glances, the heart is defiled. 2. He who makes Religion his business, watcheth *his thoughts*, lest they should turn to froth, *Jer.* 4. 14. *How long shall vain*

7 *Charact.*

ὅσις ἡμὶν ἀγρυπνείας χρείαν.

vain thoughts lodge within thee? What a world of sin is minted in the phancie! a child of God sets a spy over his thoughts, he summons them in, and *captivates them to the obedience of Christ*, 2 Cor. 10. 5. 3. He who makes Religion his business, watcheth his *passions*; passion is like gunpowder, which the Devil setting on fire blows up the soul. *Jonah* in a passion quarrels with the Almighty, *Jonah* 4. 1, 9. He who is devoted to Religion, watcheth his passions, least the tyde growing high, *reason* should be carried down the stream, and be drowned in it. 4. He who makes Religion his business, watcheth his *duties*, Matth. 26. 41. *Watch and Pray.* First, he doth watch *in* prayer, the heart is subject to *remisness*, if it be not dead in sin, it will be dead in prayer; a Christian watcheth, least he should abate his fervour in duty; he knows of the strings if his spiritual Viol slacken, he cannot *make melody in his heart to the Lord.* Secondly, he doth watch *after* prayer; as a man is most careful of himself when he comes out of an hot bath, the pores being then most open and subject to cold: so a Christian is most careful when he comes from an Ordinance, lest his heart should decoy him into sinne; therefore when he hath prayed he sets a watch: he deals with his heart as the *Jews* dealt with Christs sepulchre, *Matth.* 27. 66. *They made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone and setting a watch.* A good Christian having been at the Word, and Sacrament, (that sealing Ordinance) after the *sealing* he *sets a watch.* 5. He who makes Religion his business, watcheth his *temptations*: Temptation is the scout the Devil sends out to discover our forces; 'tis the train he layes to blow up our grace. Satan ever lies at the catch, he hath his *depths*, Rev. 2. 24. his *methods*, Ephes. 4. 14. his *devices*, 2 Cor. 2. 11. he is continually fishing for our souls, and if Satan be angling, we had need be watching: He who makes Religion his business is full of holy excubation, he lies sentinel, and with the Prophet *stands upon his watch-tower*, Hab. 2. 1. *Solomon* saith of a virtuous woman, *her candle goes not out by night*, Prov. 31. 18. the good Christian keeps his watch-Candle alwaies burning. Col. 3. 16. βάθεα μεθοδίας νοήματα

8. He who makes Religion his business, every day casts up his accounts to see how things go in his soul. *Solomon* saith, *know the state of thy flock*, Prov. 27. 23. a man that makes Religion his work, is careful to know the state of his soul; before the Lord brings him to a tryal, he brings himself to a tryal; he had rather use the *looking-glass* of the word to see his own heart, than put on the broad spectacles 8. *Charact.* Lam. 3. 40. *Senec.*

spectacles of censure to see anothers fault: he playes the Critick upon himself, he searcheth what sin is in his heart unrepented of, and having found it out, he labours by his tears, as by *the waters of* Numb. 5. 22. *jealousie*, to make the thigh of sin to rot: He searcheth whether he have grace or no, and he tries whether it be genuine or spurious; he is as much afraid of painted holiness, as he is of going to a *painted* Heaven: He traverseth things in his soul, and will never leave, till 2 Cor. 13. 5. that question, *whether he be in the faith*, be put out of question: Here is the man making Religion his business; he is loth to be a *spiritual* bankrupt, therefore is still calling himself to account, and wherein he comes short, he gets Christ to be his surety.

9 Charact. 9. He who makes Religion his business, will be religious whatever it cost him: He is a resolved man, *Psal.* 116. 109. *I have sworn I will keep thy righteous judgments.* There are some who *will be rich*, 1 *Tim.* 6. 9. and there are some who *will* be godly, 2 *Tim.* 3. 12. He that makes Religion his business, will not (as *Luther* saith) be put off with other things, he can want health, riches, friends, but he cannot want Christ or grace; *he will be godly*: let the times be what they will, they shall not take him off the work of *Religion*, he will follow Christ *upon the water*, the flouds of persecution cannot drown his zeal; he doth not say, *There is a Lyon in the way*, he will wrastle with difficulties, march in the face of death. The Christians of the Primitive Church cryed out to the Persecutor, *Hew us in pieces, burn us, we will never worship your Idols*: these were in good earnest for Heaven. There is a great deal of difference *between* them who go to sea for pleasure, and those mariners who are to go a voyage to the *East Indies*: The first upon the least storm retreat back to shore; but they who are imbarqued for a voyage, hold *on* their course, though the Sea be rough and stormy, and will venture their lives in hope of the golden harvest at the *Indies*. Hypocrites seem religious when things are serene and calm, but they will not sayl in a storm: Those only who make Religion their business, will hold out their voyage to Heaven in the midst of tempests, and death-threatning dangers.

Ure, tunde, dilacera, Idola tua non adorabimus, Tertul.

10 Charact. 10. He that makes Religion his business, lives every day as his last day; he prayes in the morning, as if he were to die at night; he lives as if he were presently to be called to Gods barr; he walks *soberly, righteously, godly*; he *girds his loyns, trims his lamp*, sets his house in order, that when death comes for him with an *Habeas* Tit. 2. 14. *Corpus*, he may have nothing to do but to die. Behold here the man

man who makes Religion his business.

Use 3. Let me perswade all you whose consciences may smite you for former neglects, *now* set upon the work, make Religion your business; contend *tanquam pro aris & focis*, bestir your selves in this as in a matter of life and death. *Quest.* But how must we do to make Religion our business? *Answ.* That you may be serious in this work, I shall lay down several Rules for your help and direction herein. *Use* 3. *Exhortation.* *Quest.* *Answ.* Rules for making Religion our business.

1. If you would make Religion your business, possess your selves with this maxime, That Religion is the end of your Creation. God never sent men into the world only to eat and drink, and put on fine cloaths; but the end of their creation is to honour him, 1 *Pet.* 4. 11. *That God in all things may be glorified*: Should the body onely be tended and looked after, this were to trim the *scabbard* instead of the *blade*; it were to invert and frustrate the very end of our being. 1. *Rule.*

2. If you would make Religion your business, get a change of heart wrought; breathe after a principle of holiness: he cannot make Religion his business, who hath no Religion. Can the body move without a principle of life? Christian, get thy heart spirituallized by grace; an earthly heart will no more trade in Heaven, than a millstone will ascend, or a Serpent fly in the air: the heart must be divinely touched with the Spirit, as the needle with the loadstone, ere it can cleave to God, and *follow him fully*; never expect the practise to be holy, till first there be an holy principle. 2. *Rule.* Νῦν τὶ ἐν δὴν ἴδ. Numb. 14. 24.

3. If you would make Religion your business, set your selves always under the eye of God. The Masters eye makes the servant work; Gods eye will quicken our devotion. *Psal.* 16. 8. *I have set the Lord always before me*. If we leave off work, or loyter in our work, *God sees*, he hath a casement opens into our breasts; this ὀφθαλμὸς ἀκοίμητος (as *Chrysostome* calls it) this eye of God that never sleeps, would make us active in the sphere of duty: if indeed Gods eye were at any time off us, we might slacken our pace in Religion, but he is ever looking on; if we *take the wings of the morning*, we cannot fly from his presence; and he who is now the spectator, will be the judge; O how would this consideration of Gods omniscience keep us from being truants in Religion, how would it infuse a spirit of activity and gallantry into us, making us put forward with all our might in the race to Heaven! 3. *Rule.* *Interest animis nostris, & cogitationibus meis divis intervenit.* Seneca. Psal. 139. 9.

4. If you would make Religion your business, think often of the 4. *Rule.*

the shortness of time; this life is but a *vapour*, Jam. 4. 9. a *shadow*, 1 *Chron.* 29. 15. 'tis אַיִן *as nothing*, Psal. 39. 5. ὁ βίος τοῦχος, we are wheeling apace out of the world, and there's no work to be done for our souls in the grave: *Eccles.* 9. 2. *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, for there is no work nor device in the grave whither thou goest.* Now is the time of life, now is the day of grace, you know not how soon these two Suns may set: The shorter our life, the swifter should be our pace.

Cito pede præterit ætas--- Ovid. Phocylides.

5. If you would make Religion your business, get an understanding heart, weigh things seriously in the ballance of reason and judgement. Think of the infinite importance of this business, our eternal misery or happiness depends upon it: other things are but for *convenience*, this is of *necessity*: if this work be not done, we are undone; if we do not the work which believers are doing, we must do the work which Devils are doing: and if God give us a serious heart, to lay out our selves in the business of Religion, our *income* will be greater than our *expence*. Religion is a good Trade, if it be well followed; it will quit the cost; 'tis working in silver, 1 *Pet.* 1. 9. *Receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls.* God will shortly take us from the working-house to the Throne, and will set upon our head a fresh Garland made of the flowers of Paradise.

μὴ φύγης τὸν καμάτον, ἵνα τύχης τὸν στέφανον. Chrysost.

6. If you would make Religion your business, implore the help of Gods Spirit. All we can do is but lost labour, unless the Spirit excite and accelerate. Beg a gale from Heaven. *Cant.* 4. *ult.* *Awake O North wind, and come thou South blow upon my Garden, &c.* If the Spirit joyn with our Chariot, then we move to Heaven swiftly, as *the Roe upon the mountains*, or as *the Chariots of Amminadab.*

Cant. 6. 12.

Now having laid down the Rules, let me for a conclusion, press all Christians to this great duty of making Religion their business; and I will use but two weighty considerations:

1. *Motive.* 1. The sweetness that is in Religion; *all her paths are pleasantness*, Prov. 3. 17. The way of Religion is strowed with Roses, in regard of that inward peace God gives, *Psal.* 19. 11. *In keeping thy precepts there is great reward.* This is such a labour as hath delight in it: as while the mother tends her child, and sometimes beyond her strength too, yet finds a secret delight in it; so while a Christian is serving God, there's that inward contentment and delight infused, and he meets with such transfigurations of soul, that he thinks himself

self half in Heaven. 'Twas Christs *meat and drink* to do his Fathers will, *John* 4.34. *Religion was* St. *Pauls recreation*, Rom. 7.22. Though I should not speak of wages, the vails God gives us in this life, is enough to make us in love with his service.

2. The second and last consideration is, That millions of persons have miscarried to eternity, for want of making Religion their business: they have something in Religion, but not to purpose: they have begun, but have made too many stops and pawses: they have been lukewarm and neutral in the business; they have served God as if they served him not; they have sinned fervently, but prayed faintly; Religion hath been a thing only by the *bye*; they have served God by fits and starts, but have not made Religion *their business*, therefore have miscarried to all eternity. If you could see a wicked mans Tombstone in Hell, you might read this Inscription upon it; *Here lies one in hellish flames, for not making Religion his business.* How many Ships have suffered shipwrak, notwithstanding all their glorious names of the *Hope*, the *Safe-guard*, the *Triumph*: so how many souls, notwithstanding their glorious title of Saintship, have suffered shipwrack in Hell for ever, because they have not made Religion their business. 2. *Motive.*

Whether well composed Religious Vows do not exceedingly promote Religion?

Psal. 116. ver. 12, & 14.

What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits towards me?

I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people.

DAvid was no *Popish votary*, nor were the *Vows* he is now about to *pay*, like the *Vows* of *Popish* and *Superstitious votaries*, either *in* the *Matter* of them, or in the *Object* of them, nor in the *Manner* or *End* of them; *and I hope you* who read these lines, are, as the greatest part of my Auditors were *far* enough *from liking* of *such Vows* in others, and *from lying under the ensnaring tye* of any such Vow *your selves*. Since then there is such unlikeness hoped from you, justifie the unlikeness and disparity between my discourse and theirs, whose business is either to state and maintain Monkish vows, or to state and overthrow them; the one the work of Popish, the other the work of Protestant Writers. *In the Words* which I have chosen, we have *a fit occasion to state our own case by* David's, who was *mindful of his debt* to the Lord, and the *more careful* to discharge it, *because* it was *due by vow*.

Two things noted will be a Key to open the words, so far as we at present are concerned in them.

1. *That the sum of all our Religion, is our rendring to the Lord.*

I might

I might ſo define Religion, and with theſe qualifications, that it be done in right and due Manner, in Right and proper Matter, it would amount to a definition of the True Religion: *All* the *Religions which men* have in the vanity and blindneſs of their minds *ſuperſtitiouſly* and *idolatrouſly adhered to*, *have been* nothing elſe but their *Rendring to* their *ſuppoſed Gods*, according to their apprehenſions and erroneous thoughts, *and* the *Rendring to the true God in a true and right manner, is the ſumme of true Religion.* This Notion is conſonant to the Scriptures: Thus *Matth.* 22. *v.* 21. *Give unto God the things that are God's*: as true loyalty is a giving to *Ceſar* the things that are *Ceſars*, ſo *true Piety* is the *giving to God the things that are God's*. And ſo in that Parable of the vineyard let out to husbandmen; *All we owe to God*, is expreſſed by the *rendring the fruit of the vineyard*; particular Acts of Religion are ſo expreſſed too in the * Scriptures. Let this then be the import of *David's* מה אשיב ליי *what ſhall I render to the Lord?* In what things? and by what means ſhall I promote Religion in the exerciſe thereof? How ſhall I ſhew my ſelf duely Religious toward him who hath been conſtantly and abundantly munificent in his benefits towards me?

Mat. 22. 21. Mat. 21. 41. * Pſal. 56 12. Hoſ. 14. 2. 2 Chro. 34 25.

The ſecond thing to be *noted* is this, that *David ſo ordered his vowes* that *he could pay them*, and *in paying them did ſo render to the Lord*, as *that Religion was promoted* and furthered; *He* had *ſo engaged* himſelf by vow, that *he could ſay I will pay*; *And his vowes* were ſuch as were *a fit Anſwer* to that enquiry, *What ſhall I render to the Lord? David* had very *well compoſed* his vow, it lay within his compaſs, *he could* perform it, and in performing *he paid Tribute* and did homage *to the Lord*; in keeping his vow he gave unto the Lord.

Now put theſe *two notes* together, and they are *reſolved* into this Doctrinal *poſition*,

Vowes, ſo made as we can ſay we will pay them, and ſo made that in paying them we render to the Lord, do much advance and promote Religion. Or in the words of that Caſe of Conſcience now to be ſtated, *Well compoſed vowes do much promote Religion.* *Doctr.*

Who ſo doth engage himſelf by a well ordered vow, doth ſet his Religion in the whole, or in ſome particular part of it in very good forwardneſs. Religion is a gainer by this bargain well made; the Bond is to God, but Religion receives the intereſt at leaſt, *Well compoſed vowes* are *Religion's engines*, able *to move* the *weightier burthens* and loads, *and fit to be only employed in them.*

In handling farther this Caſe we muſt enquire,

1. What a Vow is, that we may know of what we speak?
2. Whether a Vow may lawfully be made by us?
3. When it is well composed for Religion's advantage?
4. How much it furthereth Religion?
5. Whence this influence of a Vow upon Religious persons?
6. What proper use to make of the Position?

1. *General.* *A Vow is a voluntary and deliberate Promise made unto God in an extraordinary case. It is a Religious promise made unto God in a holy manner,* so a Modern writer defines it. It is a * *Holy and Religious promise advisedly and freely made unto God, either to do or to omit somewhat which appeareth to be grateful and well pleasing unto him.* So *Bucanus.* I forbear *Aquinas* his definition of a Vow: If these I have given satisfie not, then view it in the words of *Peter Martyr,* a man of repute and well known to our own nation *in the dayes of Edward* the Sixth of ever blessed memory; (a) *It is a Holy Promise, whereby we bind our selves to offer somewhat unto God.* There is one more who defines it, and he is a man whose judgement, Learning and Holiness hath perfumed his Name, it is Learned *Perkins* in his *Cases of Conscience. A Vow* (saith he) *is a Promise made unto God of Things Lawful and Possible.*

Of these five descriptions of a Vow, yow may indifferently choose which you will, for when you have chosen either of them, and looked upon it, yon will find it lay's an obligation upon the person vowing, and bind's him strictly, and unalterably to perform his vows: for *it is* (1.) *a promise* (b), it is not a Purpose, *not a single resolution,* much less is it the Deliberation of the mind concerning a matter not yet determined, but determinable on either part. A Vow is a Promise which had its beginning in a serious, due, and thorow Deliberation, which from Deliberation passed into a Rational, strong and fixed purpose of doing what had been *so deliberated* and weighed: Nay further yet, a Vow paseth into a formal, and express Promise, and so makes the votary a debter. This part of a Vow *Solomon* hath long since prepared for our hands, *Eccles.* 5. v. 6. *Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin, neither say thou before the Angel that it was error.* Note what *Solomon* forbids, *viz.* (c) *Offend not by rash vowing*: Nor seek excuse by saying (d) *it was an error,* i. e. *through mistake and imprudence thou hast vowed, not observing what thou didst when thou vowedst.* It must be a deliberate, and advised act of a man if he will duely vow to God. (2.) *It is* said to be *voluntary*; the thing speaks it self, *a Vow* must be *free,* it is injurious

Est promissio Religiosa facta Deo, Szegedin. loc. com.

* *Est sancta & Religiosa promissio Deo consulto & spontè, facta ad aliquid faciendum vel omittendum quod illi gratum & acceptum fore constat.* Bucan. *loc. com.* 45.

a *Est sancta promissio quâ nos obstringimus Deo aliquid oblaturos esse.* Pet. Mart. *loc. com. de votis.*

b Deut. 23. 23.

c *Ne committas temerè vovendo.* Mercer. *in loc.*

d *Neq; dixeris te per errorem & imprudentiam vovisse, nec advertisse quid faceres dum viveres.* Mercer. *in loc.*

injurious to extort a Promiſe from a man; free choice ſhould be the ſpring of every promiſe much more of every Vow. The old Law empowerd ſome perſons to diſanul the vow of another, but no Law or reaſon can empower any one to enforce a Vow upon another, each one may forbear to vow, *Deut.* 23. *v.* 22. (3.) As it muſt be voluntarily and deliberate, ſo *it muſt be to God alone*; we read ſtill, *if thou wilt vow, thou ſhalt vow to the Lord*: Not to Angels with ſuch as worſhip them, not to Saints with ſuperſtitious Papiſts; not to any man, man may promiſe ſolemnly unto man, but he may not vow; man may be the witneſs of thy vow, but man may not be the object. For the dependance of man upon man, is not great enough to warrant the one in vowing, or the other in expecting ſuch a vow; beſide that, we muſt not vow to one, we muſt not pray to, nor can we expect help from man in caſes that are juſt ground for, and which do require a vow from us. Which caſes (4.) *I ſay are extraordinary*, and more than uſual either *from received mercy or hoped* and expected *mercy*; It is impoſſible he ſhould well compoſe his vowes, or duely pay them, who makes ordinary, and daily caſes ground of his vowes; we cannot but forget many an ordinary mercy received, but we may not, muſt not forget any vow made: *We muſt pray for every mercy we want*, but *we may not bind our ſelves in the bonds of a vow for every mercy we pray for*, this would inevitably caſt us upon the ſin of falſehood and unfaithfulneſes in our vowes.

But I proceed to *the ſecond thing* to be *enquired into*, that is, *Whether* it be *lawful in any caſe for us* now *under* the *New Teſtament to make a Vow?* That it was lawful for the *Jew*, none have doubted, but ſome *doubt* is *made*, *whether a Chriſtian may voluntarily bind himſelf to God by making a Vow?* The ſolution of this doubt is ne- 2. *General.*
ceſſary to our clearer determination of this Caſe, for if vows were now unlawful to us, they could neither be well compoſed, nor could they advantage Religion; and if it may appear they may lawfully be made, then we may go on in the conſideration of the remaining particulars. To this ſecond then very briefly we anſwer, *That a Chriſtian may lawfully make a promiſe or Vow unto God, binding himſelf more than ordinarily unto God for, and in expectation of mercy, in ſome or other more than ordinary caſe or exigency.* For a great mercy received already a Chriſtian may vow thankfulneſs, for a mercy not received but expected, he may vow upon the receipt to render to the Lord more than uſual duty. *Such vows at this day may be*

uſed

Ejuſmodi vota hodie quoq; no-bis in uſu eſſe poſſunt, quoties nos Dominus vel à clade ali-qua, vel à morbo difficili, vel ab alio quovis diſcri-mine eripuit. Calvin. *Inſtit. l. 4. c. 13.*

uſed by us, ſo often as the Lord hath delivered us from any deſtruction, or dangerous diſeaſe, or from any danger, ſaith *Calvin*, ſpeaking of Vowes for mercy to be received. And Mr. *Perkins* in his Caſes of conſcience, *both* affirms what we now do, *and* anſwers the Objections made to the contrary. But leave we men, and come to Reaſon; why it is lawful for us to vow.

* 1. Vowes well-ordered not ſin in themſelves, nor by acci-dent.

1. *What* is *not evil in it ſelf, nor evil by accident* * (unleſs made evil by the undue ordering of it through our fault) *may lawfully be done by us.* I know this well conſidered proves it ſelf; yet I would confirm it with this obſervation: What is not evil, may law-fully be done by us; now things are evil either *per ſe*, or *per accidens*; If Vows be either way evil, it is by accident, which accidental evil may be prevented, and indeed is by due compoſing of Vowes, and by diligent performing of them when compoſed. So that if a Chri-ſtian may order the making and performing his Vow, ſo as to pre-vent the evil which attends a Vow ill-made; than ſuch a Chriſtian may ſurely make a Vow very lawfully. But I preſume no one will doubt, that he who makes Vowes *ſeldome, conſultedly,* and *ſincerely*, may duly keep them, and in ſo doing, prevent *any conſequent* evil.

* 2. Some Vowes once lawful on mo-ral grounds, Such lawful ſtill.

2. Vowes may be lawfully made now by us Chriſtians, becauſe *what was lawful to the Jew on Moral conſiderations, and not on any Ceremonial conſiderations, that is alſo lawful now unto us Chriſtians.* Let it be noted; I do not ſay what was once lawful to them, is now lawful unto us, for it was lawful for them to ſacrifice, *it is not* now lawful unto us: But I ſay, what was once on Moral grounds lawful to them, is now lawful to us, becauſe the morality of the thing (which is ſuppoſed the ground of this Vow) *is* the ſame to them and us. It was lawful for *Jacob* on Moral motives to engage himſelf more cloſely to God, if God would indeed be *with him*; It is as lawful for any of us on the ſame occaſion, and for the like motive, to vow unto God. *Jacob* was moved to it, leſt he ſhould be found leſs than ordinarily thankful, for a more than ordinary providence and mercy to him: So may you or I; * *for it is not ab-horrent to the duty of a pious man, at ſuch time to conſecrate (as a ſolemn teſtimony of his acknowledgement) an offering by Vow, leſt he ſhould ſeem unthankful for his bounty.* If there were then *Vota moralia, Vowes* that were *moral in their matter, manner, motives,* and *ends*; and (that ſuch there were) *Job's* covenant with his eyes, and *Da-vid's* ſwearing to keep Gods Commandments, prove to us; either we

* *Neq; enim à pii hominis of-ficio, tunc ab-horret votivam oblationem, ve-lut ſolemne re-cognitionis Symbolum conſecrare, ne ingratus erga benignitatem ejus videatur.* Calvin. *Inſtit l. 4. c. 13.*

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we muſt ſay they did what was unlawfull, or elſe we cannot make ſuch moral Vows,) which is not rational to ſuppoſe) or elſe yielding ſuch Vows ſo made to be lawfull to them, they are ſo to us. But thirdly.

Vows may lawfully be made by us Chriſtians, for *it is a kind of thankfulneſs and acknowledgment made to God, with the univerſall approbation and conſent of men.* It is ſuch a chief Rent that no Nation in the world putting a valüe on Gods goodneſs, and putting a difference between great and little dangers, between great and little bleſſings, but did conſtantly approve this way of preventing great dangers, by great Vows, and reſenting great bleſſings, by like vowed praiſes. Thus addreſſing themſelves in a more then ordinary manner to their Gods, on more than ordinary exigences: And if I muſt bring my witneſſes to depoſe for the truth, one ſpeaks in Engliſh thus; *Vow was uſed frequently by all Nations and people beſet with danger.* Another learned Pen at once intimateth the univerſallity of the cuſtome, and cenſureth the vanity and blind folly of the Heathens, in their Vows to their Idol-Gods. Hence *the † follies and monſtrous abſurdities of the Heathens in their Vows, wherewith they did too inſolently abuſe their Gods.* It were endleſs to attempt what teſtimonies might be gathered up in this point: but by theſe it is apparent, that thankfulneſs is a debt which all Nations apprehended might and ought to be enſured to God by Vow. So that hence I would collect, that as gratitude is not only lawfull, but a duty imprinted on the ſoul of man; ſo this high degree of gratitude is is a Copy, or Tranſcript of that Original: It is lawful doubtleſs to us, to be thankful in the higheſt degree. Now the return of more than ordinary duty, for more than ordinary mercy, is the higheſt, and is the Vow we ſpeak of.

3. *Vows by generall conſent of Nations approved.*

Quid enim niſi Vota ſuperſunt. Ovid.

Votum omnibus gentibus & populis in periculo conſtitutis uſitatum. Szegedin. *loc. com. de Votis.*

† *Hinc illa votorum inepti, imo prodigioſa abſurditates apud Ethnicos, quibus nimis inſolenter cum dijs ſuis luſerunt.* Calvin. *Inſtit. l. 4. c. 13.*

Fourthly, *Unleſs ſuch Vows may be accounted lawfull to us, I cannot ſee how we have any way of making free, voluntary, and extraordinary acknowledgments unto God.* For ſince all duty is commanded, and ſo determined as to matter and manner ordinarily, that the Law preſcribes, and enjoyns them, and we may not ſuperadde any thing to the Law; yet ſometime more than ordinary mercy gives us command to be more than ordinary in our acknowledgements, which ſince it may not be by doing any thing not commanded, muſt be done by adding our own promiſe and word, to have more than our ordinary care was, or otherwiſe would have been, to do what is commanded; or elſe it muſt be left undone as unlawfull,

4. *Vows the only Goſpel free-will-offering extraordinary.*

full, which is in the iſſue to leave us without any way of binding our ſelves to acknowledgements, ſuited to extraordinary providences. In a word, Seeing the Law of God is the ſtanding rule of our daily obedience, and is the ſame unchanged rule of our daily duties; but withal the mercies and varieties of providences are a Law likewiſe to us Chriſtians, and when great, require great and ſuitable deportment in us. We muſt have ſome way, and that lawful, to meaſure out our reſentments, which can be no other, but the laying bonds and voluntary obligations on our ſelves unto God, which is the ſame with this Vow. Either there muſt be ſome ſuch lawful way, or elſe great providential mercies which call for greater returns, and are a real Law to us, cannot be duely obſerved and obeyed. Now I know riches of grace in the Goſpel have not ſo intrenched on, or done injury to providences. I know that as grace is no enemy to the ſtanding Law, nor patronizeth licentiouſneſs; ſo neither is grace an enemy to providence, nor warranteth any one to overlook the greatneſs, and extraordinary mercy in any providences; or to be careleſs and ſleight in anſwering them with unſutable return of thankfulneſs. But,

5 Vows beſt enſure duty, & enſnare not us.

Fifthly, *That is lawful to us Chriſtians, which doth moſt certainly enſure our duty to God, yet doth not enſnare us in the enſuring of it.* That you or I may do lawfully, which will not enſnare us, but more ſtrongly engage us to our duty, none will doubt this. In dealing with a man, you, or I, or any reaſonable man would be ready to give any ſecurity that we might give, without enſnaring of our ſelves. Now *Vows well compoſed do more enſure the duty, for we cannot go back,* Judg. 11. 35. *it is a Vow; yet do not enſnare,* for *we can perform them, they are Vows well compoſed. Jephthah's Vow bound him* faſt, *for it was the bond of a Vow*; but *this* bond *enſnared him,* for *it was raſh,* and *ill compoſed;* ſuch was *unlawful to him* and is to us. *David's Vow* here was an *enſuring him to God,* and his duty, it *unalterably bound him*; *yet it was no ſnare* to him, for *he had* ſo *vowed,* that *he could* ſay, *I will pay my Vows*; *ſuch Vows* were *lawful to him,* ſuch are lawful to us. Now all well compoſed Vows will be ſuch; they will very firmly bind us to our duty, and they will never enſnare us in their binding us; which thing will be more plainly ſeen, upon diſcovery of the next General, *viz.*

2. General. It muſt be, 1. In extraordinary caſes.

When Vows are well compoſed, and ſo conſequently for the advantage of Religion?

Firſt then, If you would duely and well compoſe your Vows, *you*

you must wait a fit season, not vow on every occasion. Who is ready to vow on every occasion, will break his Vow on every occasion. It is a necessary Rule, That *we be as sparing in making our Vowes, as may be*; there being many great inconveniencies attending frequent, and multiplyed Vows. It is very observable, that the Scripture mentioneth very few examples of Vows, compared with the many Instances of very great and wonderful providences; *as if it would give us some Instances that we might know what we have to do, and yet would give us but few that we might know we are not to do it often.* You read *Jacob* lived sevenscore and seven years, *Gen.* 47. 28. but you read (I think) but of one Vow that he made: Our extraordinary exigencies are not many, and I say our Vows should not be more. Let this then be the first necessary ingredient of a well-ordered vow. Let it be no oftner made, then the pressing greatness of an evil to be removed, or the alluring excellency of a blessing extraordinary to be obtained, will well warrant. *Jephthah's* vow was so far right; he had just occasion; there was a great and pressing danger to be removed; there was an excellent blessing to be obtained; the danger was lest *Israel* should be enslaved; the blessing was victory over their enemies: This warranted his Vow, though his rashness marred it. It was in *David's* troubles that *David* sware, and vowed a Vow to the most High, *Psal.* 132. 1, 2. And *Jacob* forbare to vow, untill his more than ordinary case bade him vow, and warranted him in so doing, *Gen.* 28. 20. Let us do as he did, spare to vow, until such case puts us on it.

Secondly, When the extraordinary case warrants thee to this extraordinary obliging thy self, then *be sure to proceed deliberately, and with advice.* Consider what thou dost; every one condemns rash Vowes, and I am sure inconsiderate Vowes are rash ones. Here *Jephthah* failed; he did not consider, and ponder with himself, what he was about to do when he vowed: *Aquinas* reckons this among the three things necessary to a Vow. And since this was wanting in *Jephthah*, *the Scripture makes a narration of his fact, but no where giveth commendation to it.* This is one of the conditions *Bucan* prescribes, *That we thoroughly weigh*: But we have a greater than *Aquinas*, or *the other two*, here; *Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God*, Eccl. 5. 2. Which rule he doth in the Context extend to this case of Vowes, *Verse* 4, 5, 6. Be not hasty, but *deliberate* these *four* things in thy Vow;

2. It must be deliberate.

Ad votum tria de necessitate requiruntur; sc. deliberatio, &c. 2a. 2æ. q. 88. art. 1. Scriptura hoc ejus factum narrat tantum sed non laudat. Pet. Mart. loc. com. cl. 3. c. 6. Ut maturè deliberemus. loc. com. de votis.

1. *Whether lawful.*

1. First, *Whether that thou vowest to do be lawful; for can never be the matter of a justifiable and well composed Vow.* If that thou vowest be not lawful, it is not so much a Vow, as a contriving and designing of vvickedness. *It was a murderous conspiracy* of those *more than forty*, Act. 23. 21. *not a Vow*, to take away *Paul's* life. Whatever God hath forbidden us in our ordinary course of life, as he hath forbidden every sin, that cannot be the matter of an extraordinary promise unto God. The Schoolmen tells us it is to be *de meliore bono, in an excellent good*; now vvhat is not lawful, is not good. They tell us, *Debet fieri Deo, de iis quæ Dei sunt.* *It must be made to God, in those things that are of God*; and vve are sure no unlawful things is of God.

Aquin. 2. 2. q. 88. ar. 1. c.

2. *Whether acceptable to God.*

2. *As it must be considered, whether the thing be lawful; so must we are to consider, whether it will be acceptable unto the Lord.* The Vovv is made to him, and the performance of it is to him: It is a Debt, and payment is to be made to him. *If it be a matter which though lawful now after search, may be indeed lawful; yet in reason to be thought, not acceptable for sufficient a mercy as that hath required; thou will be enforced to confess thy mistake and vrge to unvow.* And this is to provoke God, *Eccles. 5. 6. Sin Deo accepum*, is the second circumstance under deliberation: Which will be seen,

3. *Whether proportioned.*

3. By a third particular, *i. e. Whether that thing, thou vowest, bear a proportion to that thou didst vovv, and pray for when thou wast in distress, or that which thou hast received, for which thou didst now make thy Vow.* Bring it, vvith the circumstance which occasioned it, together; and hear vvhat thy own heart, vvhat other mens judgements, vvhat the very things themselves, vvhat thy receipts and returns by thy Vovves, in the matter of them, as in ordinary, for an extraordinary mercy, *is acceptable and accepted, and will prove*, that vvhich is vovved proportioned, it vvill please and thrive; if disproportioned, it vvill displease thee; and neither vvill be so vvell accepted. Though one needs more when thou art hungry, is more, and a greater mercy, than thou canst equal by thy obedience; yet to vvorm-eaten fell, and all that is time for that our mercy is more than expected, and may be called a disproportioned Vovv. So on the contrary, to pray for a prosperous voyage, and an ample return of thousands, and to vovv thereupon a few pence or shillings, is disproportioned, will not be accepted. *Thou must render to the Lord, according to thy receipts from the Lord.*

Fourthly,

Fourthly, In a well-composed Vow, thy deliberation must be imployed in considering thy power and ability; *Whether it be in thy power to do what thou vowest: No impossible thing can be the matter of a Vow.* God hath not made an impossibility the matter and primitive object of our duty; nor doth he expect we should; or would he accept such a Vow: for a Vow of an impossible thing, is in effect to bind ourselves to falsifie our Vow. *Who ever undertakes to do what he cannot do, engageth himself to be unfaithful to his word.* You must consider then whether the thing be possible in it self; and then next whether it be in your power, that you can say you will do it, that you may truly affirm you can absolutely do it; which thing being very uncertain, for what is to day in our power, to morrow may be out of our power: It is therefore good to limit it so far, as it shall be in your power, as long as it continues in your power to perform your Vows. Thirdly, 4. How well-composed Vows are made.

Thirdly, Three things are requisite to a well-composed Vow; an occasion of extraordinary more than ordinary; and then a thing lawful, acceptable, proportioned to the mercy, and within our power. Now when these concure,

A third may be added, that is, *Then must vow cheerfully, and with a ready mind*; i. there must be much of the will in it. Some tell us the Latine word noting a Vow, comes from the word which signifies the will: Indeed *all* that is *in a Vow, so far as it is a Vow, is* and must be *of our will*, for it consisteth principally, if not solely, in the manner of our obliging our selves: and this is voluntary. God hath left it much at our liberty to vow, or not to vow; only, he requires us to do it cheerfully if we vow; it is matter of our choice you: *Deut.* 23. 22. *If thou forbear it, it shall not be sin unto thee.* Yet if we will Vow, it is matter of duty to do it cheerfully, for *the Lord loveth a cheerfull giver*, 2 Cor. 9. 7. and therefore expects a speedy performance. *Defer not to pay*, *Eccl.* 5. 3. Hence the Rabbinical Proverb, *Speed sets the time of deliverance.* As a Vow suits the time of dangers and straits; so haste from a ready mind, fits the time of deliverance and mercy. But, 3. Vowes must be cheerfully made.

בשעת רוחא שישמא

Tempore respirationis festinatio.

Fourthly, *He that will compose his Vow well, must vow sincerely and uprightly*, that is, *to this end he may most honour God.* By 4. Vow sincerely.

1. The *Commemoration of his mercy*, and goodness. Vows are mercies Monuments, on which are written the praises of the Lord.

2. The *publishing the mercies* of God, for the engaging others to admire the Lord, and to trust him, and to seek unto him.

3. The *setting grace on work in the heart* and soul of him that

Vows. It sets grace on work, *both* in that part which eyes God to draw nearer, and to keep closer to him, *and* in that part which *keeps* eye on sin to prevent, mortifie, and destroy it: So then *when a Christian*, (having received, or being in expectation of some extraordinary mercy from God) *doth deliberately promise*, what *is lawfull in it self, acceptable to God, proportioned to the mercy*, and, *within his power to perform*; *who* so *doth this chearfully*, and *sincerely*, *that God may be honoured in the continued remembrance of it, in the publick declaring it*, and *in the exisiting of grace, in the person Vowing*; *Then hath a Christian well composed his Vow*. And such a Vow doth very much further Religion: Which will appear by handling the next thing, *How much, or in what things it doth further and promote Religion?* Now there are three grand concerns of Religion, than which it hath none greater; and all three are carried on, and *promoted by* such Vows as these.

4. *General.* How well composed Vows promote Religion.

The credit of Religion.

First, *Religion hath it's concernment in the credit and reputation which it hath in the World*: Religion hath a name to look after so well as you, or I; and it loseth, or gaineth as it is either honoured, or reproached by the Professors of it: Now when times of extraordinary danger drive us to our Prayers and Vows to the true God, and we resolve to have mercy from him, or to choose to fall into his hand; this sets the credit and honour of Religion, that it can have recourse to God whom we know can deliver us. This is somwhat, but the making a Vow doth not so much honour Religion as the performing of it doth, when it is hereby declared to the *world*, *that* Religion is the thing makes men the same in their mercies, which they were in their distresses; that the God they worship *is* the true God, able to require their Vows if they should neglect to pay them. A Heathen who in distress makes a Vow, and in his safety *performs* it carefully, putteth a very high honour upon his false God, upon his Idol. What Christian soever makes and keeps his Vows duely doth likewise put an honour on the true God.

It honours,

1. *The power and providence of God, by acknowledging its Soveraignty over all in the world, and its particular disposing and over-ruling of us and our concerns*, when thou Prayest and Vowest in a strait, thou seemest to tell the World thou believest that thy God rules the World by his power and providence. But when thou payest thy Vows thou really testifiest to the World that thou believest, and owneſt this power in thy particular case; so when *Jephthah*, when *David* paid their

Vows,

Vows, they did give real teſtimony that their God delivered them by his power and providence, and this is Religious honour that it is the Worſhip of ſo mighty a God.

2. *It honours God in his readineſs to hear, and in his faithfulneſs to anſwer the prayers of his ſuppliants*; Prayers conceived ſpeak a belief that he is ready, Vows made ſpeak our confidence that he is faithful, but now Vows performed ſpeak thus much, that we have found him ſo to us; when *David* ſaid, *I will pay my vows*, it is, that he may render to the Lord for the Lords readineſs and faithfulneſs to hear and deliver him. Now its Religious honour, that it is the worſhip of a God of truth and faithfulneſs.

3. *It honours God in his Omniſcience and all-ſeeing eye, it declares to the world that we worſhip and ſerve a God who takes notice of us in particular, and who obſerves whether we keep our word with him or no*; when thou haſt made a Vow, and canſt perform it, yea doſt perform it, becauſe thou knoweſt and believeſt thy God remembers when thou didſt make it, and obſerveth how thou wilt perform it, what is this but to give him the honour of his all-ſeeing and all-obſerving eye!

4. *It honours Religion in that it is a Demonſtration that Religion teacheth men gratitude.* It is a high charge which is laid on the *Romans* in their Heatheniſm, that they were unthankful, *Rom.* 1. 21. *It is a very great reproach to Religion, to have its profeſſors branded with this*: It is (though but one ſingle miſcarriage) left on *Hezekiah's* name, like a ſpot in the Moon, to endure while his name ſhall be in remembrance. *That he remembred not to return to the Lord, according to the benefit done unto him*, 2 Chron. 32. 25. But *now* thy *care to make* thy Vows well, *that they may be kept*, and thy *thankfulneſs in keeping them*, when ſo made, *do* clearly *evidence*, *that* thy *Religion engageth thee to aim* and *attempt at the higheſt gratitude*. Now according to the old Rule, if *you ſay a man is unthankful, you ſay he is all naught*; ſo if you ſay he is thankful, and his Religion teacheth him to be ſo, you ſpeak all good of the man and of his Religion. Indeed *David* doth often compriſe all Religion in this, *Be thankful unto him.*

Si ingratum dixeris omnia dixiſti.

So *Religion ſhineth* forth in the luſtre and brightneſs of a good name, *when* they *who profeſs it, dare neither be raſh* in *making*, not *remiſs* or falſe *in keeping their Vows.*

Next Vows well compoſed, and faithfully performed, do much promote Religion, and that frequently,

2. *By*

Spreading Religion.

2a. *By ſetting forward the growth of Religion, in the midſt of thoſe who profeſs it.* (for I will only ſpeak of this now, albeit I might ſpeak of the ſpreading of Religion amongſt ſuch, who before were ſtrangers to it, by the faithfulneſs of ſome zealous, prudent, and induſtrious votaries.) When Chriſtians on great exigencies are brought on their knees to pray, and plead, and confeſs, and promiſe, if they may be heard, and when they come to praiſe, acknowledge and pay their Vows to God in the preſence of thoſe are called his people; it is very powerful to

By confirming.

1. *Confirm them in the profeſſion, and to eſtabliſh them*; For who would not hold faſt where he can obſerve ſuch goodneſs, tenderneſs, and power in God he worſhippeth? Men, religious men, ſome at leaſt will praiſe the Lord, for ſuch wonderful works to the children of men; when they ſee ſuch *excellent loving kindneſs ſhewed to the diſtreſſed, the children of men will put their truſt in God.* None will leave the ſhadow of that wing which ſo ſaveth.

Pſal. 107.

Pſal. 36. 7.

Reforming.

2. *It is very like to make them enquire into the wayes and doings which have been theirs, but have not been good*, and to look forward to the wayes which muſt be theirs, and muſt be amended; when a ſtander by ſhall obſerve the diſtreſs a good man is in, and how he reſents neglect of duty, prevalency of corruption, neceſſity of reforming, and binds himſelf to more diligent diſcharge of duty, to more vigorous oppoſition of ſin, to conſtant care of reforming; he is ready to reflect on himſelf, and if he be what he profeſſeth, will judge himſelf one who is as deep in the faults, as much needing to reform, and as near to the like or greater diſtreſs; he may ere long be put to it, and therefore it will be beſt to be on the amending hand.

3. *Vows promote Religion in the Votaries heart and life.*

3dly, *Vows well made, and kept well, very much improve and promote Religion in the heart, and life of him who ſo vowes and keepeth his Vow.* If none of thoſe who are acquainted with thy religious making and keeping thy Vowes, ſhould either honour it more, or ſet to the exerciſe of it more, yet certainly it will produce ſuch effects in thy life, as will very much conduce to the increaſe of godlineſs and righteouſneſs; which will appear by ſome few particulars, which are undeniably the effects of a well-compoſed Vow, and do as undeniably promote and ſet forward Religion: As

1. *Vowes encreaſe circumſpection.*

Firſt, *A well compoſed Vow will make thee more circumſpect and wary in the general courſe of thy life.* Such an influence it hath, as doth more directly work on the particular part, yet is not terminated to that particular only. It is here as with a Debtor, who doubles

bles his bond and security for his debt, upon some extraordinary favour which his Creditor shewed him. This double bond directly looks to that particular debt, but it works on the debtor's ingenuity and gratitude, to be more careful in the discharge of all his debts; so thy Vow looks on a particular, but engageth thee to better discharge of all thy debts to God. Thus it was with *David*, Psal. 56. 12, 13. *Thy Vowes are upon me, O God.* Now these Vowes were made when he was in danger of his life, as it seemeth from the 13th *Verse*. For when God heard him, *he delivered his soul from death*; for this he Vowed Praises in particular, and he will render them, but withal, he takes himself to be hereby engaged to a more exact and circumspect walk before God in all duties; so he expresseth himself, *Verse* 13. latter part, *Vowes are too broad and general, which are not fixed more especially to some one thing.* And, *They are too narrow which are so fixed to one, that they exclude all other things which might conveniently be taken in.* *Jacob* mentions Tithes as the particular object of his Vow, but *Jacob* withal intended a more exact and circumspect care over himself and Family in matters of Religion, as appeareth by those passages, *Genesis* 35. 2, 3. *Then Jacob said unto his houshold, and to all that were with him, put away the strange Gods that are among you.* Here is the reforming of his houshold. And observe this was *in consideration of Gods answering his prayers*, when he Vowed unto God, who answered him in his distress, and *was with him in the way which he went.* So then like a stream it riseth from one spring-head, and runs in one plain current, but it disperseth it self through many other smaller branches, and waters every part. But,

Secondly, *Well composed Vowes do very much promote Grace and Holiness in the heart of the power, in that it doth bring the man to a serious view and survey of his former defects and neglects*; when he comes to look over his streets, what likely brought them on him, and so put him on this extraordinary way of seeking God, and suing for mercy, when he reads over the bond he hath voluntarily entred into, and observes what put him thus in debt to God; when he views these and such like particulars, he comes to knowledge of his former aberrations and defects. Now as a good and careful husband accounts he is in a good forwardness to a thriving way when he hath found out what did hinder and endamage his trade, for removal of which he hath set himself in a hopeful and likely way; so when a Christian comes

Vowes discover former defects.

to

to cast up accounts, to make even, he finds an unconstant and starting heart hath in this or that particular endammaged him, and if there be any way of dealing with it to keep it constant and stable, it is by doubling its bonds, and this must be done by vow; this course is like to repair former defects, and reparation I am sure is good and effectual means to keep up the house. Some Interpreters *tell* us that when *Jacob* came to reform his house, it was occasioned by his defective observance of his Vow; and that God in *Gen.* 35. 1. puts him in mind of it in such words, *Go up to Bethel and dwell there, and there build an Altar*; if their conjecture fail not, it is a pertinent instance to our case; *Jacob* had made a good Vow, and well ordered, and doubtless had performed much of it. yet thirty years after he is minded of it by God, and then he comes to consider and performe what was yet wanting, to make up *his defects; Thus when care to perform Vows well made, discovers things ill carried to the prejudice of Religion, it makes way for future furtherance of Religion.*

Dub. But it is like you will enquire, *May a Christian vow the repairing of such defects?* are they not more than can be discerned? more than can be prevented? should he vow this would he not ensnare himself and break his vows?

Sol. To this I answer briefly, That *no man in the world may engage himself by vow, to live for future without any defects*, such perfection is onely in Heaven; here it is not attainable. But *a Christian may engage by Vow to be careful*, and to do his best diligence *to prevent as many as he can:* He may vow, that so far as Grace shall enable him, he will endeavor to live with fewer faults. But *a vow of full perfection can never be a well composed Vow*, nor ever be performed.

3. *Vows engage against a particular sin.* *Thirdly*, Well composed vows do promote Religion in the heart and life of a Christian, in that *it strongly and unalterably engageth the Christian against some one or other particular sinne, which would more easily prevail, if the reverence or care of so sacred an engagement did not set the Christian against that sinne.* Sometime we should sin by taking too little notice of great providences, or by setting them at too low rate, or by soon forgetting them, or by waxing proud and insolent under them. Now such sins provoke God, weaken Religions interest in the heart, and diminish its fruit in the life. Now when vows prevent such sinnes, they do as much promote Religion as perventing Physick promotes the health of the body; of such

ſuch a nature was *Job's* covenant with his eyes, which ſhut the windowes of his ſoul, and kept out ſin by preventing its entrance at the out doors. *I have made a covenant with my eyes*, Job 31. 1. Away then with all alluring beauties, I cannot gaze on them, for I cannot be falſe to my vow and covenant. Every vow is for more ſtrict and exact approbation of our ſelves, in either univerſal, or particular, either in a perpetual or temporary obſervance and ſerving the Lord: Now that promotes Religion, which thus exactly and ſtrictly binds the ſoul to approve it ſelf to God: Sin and Religion have two concernments as contrary to each other, as the Rebel, and the Law of his Soveraigne, and as he promotes the intereſt of his Soveraigne who doth ſtrictly bind himſelf to oppoſe any Rebel, ſo he promotes Religion who by vow binds himſelf ſtrictly to oppoſe any one ſin whatever. If *Noah* vowed after his miſcarriage againſt drinking any conſiderable quantity of wine that he might prevent that ſin, this vow ſtrengthened the intereſt of his holy ſobriety, and the intereſt of Religion too, ſo far as ſobriety promotes our fitneſs and greater aptneſs to Religious works.

But I ſhall be here asked, *May a man vow againſt any one particular ſinne, and bind himſelf by ſo a great a bond againſt the committing of it?* The ground of the doubt is, becauſe none ſo ſtands but he may fall, and it is not in our power to keep our ſelves from any ſin. *Dub.*

To this then I anſwer, That *it would be raſh and inconſiderate to vow abſolutely and peremptorily, that thou wilt never act ſuch or ſuch a ſinne.* But thus thou muſt juſtifiably vow; *Sol.*

1. *That thou wilt endeavour, and with thy beſt diligence labour to prevent this or that ſinne*; thou mayeſt vow to ſet a guard upon thy ſoul, but thou mayeſt not vow the ſucceſs of this guard; the *endeavour* is thy *duty*, and *that thou mayeſt vow*; the *ſucceſs* is *Gods gift*, *and that thou muſt pray for.* And let weak Chriſtians take notice of this, leſt they enſnare themſelves by vowing what is not in their power.

2. *If thou wilt vow ſo, thou muſt do it ſtill with dependance on the Lord for power to perform*, through grace thou wilt not ſin thus or thus, may be thy vow.

3. If thou wilt ſo vow, then take my advice with thee, (1.) Let it be onely againſt great ſins, and ſuch as are committed with deliberation, theſe are ſeen before committed and ſo are more eaſily reſiſted. (2.) Let it reach no farther then ſincere endeavour againſt

them: And (3.) Be ſure to do your utmoſt, and then though the ſin may be too ſtrong for you, yet are you not falſe to your vow. But next,

4. Vowes encreaſe our care of particular duty.

Fourthly, *Well compoſed vowes* do much *promote Religion* in the heart and life of a Chriſtian, *inſomuch as they engage the Chriſtian to a more intent care of ſome particular duty and Grace to be more than ordinarily attended and exerciſed*: A vow binds the votary to a more than ordinary care of duty, and to a more than ordinary diligence in the exerciſe of grace; now where ſuch a vow is ſo well compoſed that the duty may be more than ordinarily well performed, and the grace may be (more than uſually hath been) exerciſed, there ſuch a vow doth as much promote Religion, as its care doth exceed our ordinary care: Who beſtows moſt on a duty, or on the conſtant exerciſe of a grace, doth do moſt to the promoting of *Religion; and* I am ſure, who ſo doth adviſedly and duely vow, and *doth punctually* and duely perform his vow, is the man whoſe care is greateſt in that duty and grace which his vow and the particular occaſion of it did commend to his thoughts.

Dub. But *may we vow to perform a duty or exerciſe a grace? Can we ſay* 'tis in our power?

Sol. To this in one word; *Vow ſo far as it is and ſhall* be *in your power, and you may warrantably and acceptably do it before God*; the performance of duty, and exerciſe of grace are debts we owe to God and we may bind our ſelves doubly to pay them ſo far as our ſtock will reach, and without this limitation every vow *is raſh and* ill compoſed.

5. Vowes, &c. by obſerving and improving providences.

Fifthly, *Well compoſed Vowes* do much *promote Religion, in that they engage us to a more diligent obſerving of Providences, and to a due improving them to the beſt advantage of grace:* When thou haſt vowed thou haſt ſealed on thy part, if God do anſwer thy hope by his providence, he performs the condition on his part, and now it muſt be thy care to obſerve Gods providence, and to improve it; ſo *Jacob* vowed, then obſerveth how God will perform with him, and afterwards makes the improvement: Now providence anſwering the expectation of one who voweth, hath in it,

1. *Remarkable power and faithfulneſs to be the ground of faith*; this was ſeen in that Providence which gave *Jephtha* that victory which was his hope and expectation when he vowed.

2. *Eminent goodneſs and tenderneſs to be the loadſtone and attractive of love*; ſo in that Providence which brought *David* to the poſſeſſion

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poſſeſſion of his hopes, and *David* thought ſo when he profeſſed he would love God dearly, becauſe he had delivered him out of the hand of all enemies. Pſal. 18. 1.

3. *Eminent readineſs to hear prayer*; when God doth as to *Jephthah* ſpeedily hear, or as to *Jacob*, continue ſtill to hear for many years together.

4. *More than ordinary obliging conſiderations to draw forth our obedience too*; ſuch Providences have tongues to call for our faith, our love, our prayers, our obedience and our praiſes; What ſhall I render to the Lord? is the ſerious well adviſed votaries enquiry.

5. *A moſt undoubted evidence appropriating this to the Lord*, that the expecting Chriſtian can truly ſay, it was the Lord's doing and his onely, none bore part in the work, none ſhall bear away ſhare of his truſt, love, prayer or obſervant obedience due to him from me.

Now if theſe particulars be conſidered, it cannot ſure be doubted longer, whether well compoſed vows do promote Religion, when they do ſo engage, and quicken thoſe who vow to ſuch Acts of Duty, to ſuch exerciſe of Grace, to ſuch oppoſition of ſinne, to ſuch improvement of providence, for the increaſe of Grace: And what is Religion but all theſe in one word, and what is the promoting of Religion, but the facilitating, continuing, and perfecting of all theſe, which is not a little furthered by ſuch Vows.

It yet remains to ſhew, *Whence theſe well compoſed Vows have ſuch influence on Religion, what have they in them more than ordinary thus to promote it?* To this I will anſwer as briefly as I may; There is in ſuch Vows a moſt notable awakening, and quickening power, which ſets all a mans care, wiſdom, truth, and ſtrength on work, to do the things whereby Religion is ſo much promoted. 5. *General.*

1. *A deep rooted natural reverence and awe of a ſerious Vow*, which makes the man who hath ſo much ſenſe of Religion as to make a Vow, to have as much care of performing it: Man is readier to caſt off the reverence he owes to Gods Law, than to caſt off the regard he hath to his own Vow, ſo that many times it is very expedient to engage by Vow to do what is our duty by the Law of God: The bond of natural conſcience is very ſtrong, and Vows have much of their ſtrength from it, and thereby become great ſupporters of Religion.

2. *To this the Chriſtian hath a ſuperadded ſtrict command and preſcript of the Law of God indiſpenſably, requiring the performance of*

that Vow which is lawfull and possible; *I have opened my mouth and I cannot go back*, Judg. 11. 35. It is the unalterable Law, if you vow, you must pay, *Psal.* 76. 12. God did indulge the Jews so far as to redeem some of their vows, but he allowed none to break them. Read that *Deut.* 23. 21. *When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it, for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee.* And *ver.* 23. *That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform.* Now when so much of Religion lieth in and dependeth on such Vows, and these Vows are such inviolable ties that God will wink at none who break them, they cannot but have such influence and strong operation on persons to the advantage of Religion.

3. *Gods severe judgments on contemners of their Vows, adde much to their influence*: I will not mention examples of vengeance on Heathens for breach of their vows, though the Idol deserved not better, yet God who is the true God, would have men know such sacred bonds as Vows should not be profaned by sleight performing, or contemned by a total neglect of them. The Jewish Rabbies tell us, that God punished *Jacob* for neglecting his vow, by *Dinah's* miscarriage. However, it is enough God hath threatned the falsifier of his vowes with no less than a destruction of the works of his hands, if not with the ruin of his person: God will not let such one go unpunished, *lest his holy Name should be scorned, lest the people should be accustomed to an impious contempt of him, if the falsifier of his Vow should deny what he promised to God and go unpunished.* In one word, that which stands thus on the unchangeable Law of Nature, and is written on the Conscience; what is confirmed and ratified by the peremptory positive Law of God, what is yet further armed with the terrible threat of the God of Heaven, must needs have a mighty binding strength in it obliging men: But now all these concurre in Vows well composed, and hence they have such influence on Religious persons. You may adde the

Ne sacrum ejus eorum ludibrio exponeretur neve populus assuesceret ad implim ejus contemptum si fraudator impunè, negaret quod Deo promiserat. Bucanus *loc. com.* 45 *de Vot.*

4th, viz. *The gratious acceptance that God gives to persons so vowing and performing their Vows.* With

5ly, *The signal Blessings crowning Religious persons in due performance of their vows*; All which make them careful to vow so, that they may say they will pay their Vows, and in paying them, render to the Lord for all his benefits.

6. *Gener.* viz. *Use.* I am come now to the last thing I intended, the practical application of this Practical Case: And here Reader I shall be briefer than

than I first purposed, because I was enforced by the undiscerned speed of the time outrunning me in preaching it, to contract much more than I was willing to have done.

The first *Use* then, if well composed Vowes do indeed much promote Religion, it *will teach us how careful we should be in making our Vowes to the greatest advantage of Religion.* If you look to the necessary requisites of such Vowes, it will appear to you that you need a great care and diligence in making them, if you look to Religions loss in the breach of Vows, or its gain in a faithful performance of them, the care will appear double; if you look to your obligation under which you are to perform them, it will appear yet further needful, that you be very wary and circumspectly careful how you make them; the rash and inconsiderate person who cares not how he makes, will not care whether he perform his Vowes. And what a reproach is this to his Religion? what a provocation is this to his God, to destroy either him, or the works of his hand? And all these bespeak your care, and advise you to circumpection in this case. Do you not find it hard enough to discern what is daily and ordinarily to be done under daily and ordinary occurrence? are you not in great care to frame your selves fitly and comely to every dayes business you have to do among men, especially when you come within the tie of a promise to them? How sollicitous are you, what, and when, and on what terms you promise? How you shall perform, and so keep your word and credit? Any competent measure of honesty, and regard to reputation will make a man consider what he promiseth to a man, How much more care should he use in promising unto God, where the promise is more than ordinary, where the tie is so indissoluble, where the demand is so punctually and peremptorily made; where the danger so great in making default. Let me commend unto thy more than ordinary care these two things, if thou wilt make a Vow so well framed as to set up Religion.

1. *Use* Informs.

First, *Be careful that thy Vow of obedience for, and in consideration of a mercy hoped or received, hold weight with that mercy*, keep a steddy hand, and get an even ballance and *weigh the mercy* which commands thy obedience, and *weigh thy Vow* which promiseth it. It will be thy reproach and Religions reproach to have thy Vow confound a *shekel*, when thy mercy weighs a *talent*; when God gives a full harvest, thou must not Vow a handful or one sheaf. This were to expose thy God to contempt, and it would be a practical denial of his bounty to thee. *Jacob* observed this proportion, *Gen.* 28. *v.* 20, 21, 22.

ככר *Talentum Hebraorum continet pondere* 3000 *sicles.* Brerewood *de ponderibus.*

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20, 21, 22. *God shall be his God*, and then *the tenth of all he hath shall be his.* Davids, *For all his benefits*, is as much as *according to all his benefits*, and that speaks proportion and commensurateness. Take care to this, for others will observe, and enquire into it. They will weigh these two, thy mercy, and thy gratitude, do thou do it first, lest thou be ashamed, lest God be provoked, and thou be punished, for as good a man, and as great as thou who ere thou art, who readest this, met with all these, with shame, with the anger of his God, and with a punishment too on him for want of this. See *Hezekiah's* fault and punishment, 2 *Chron.* 32. 25. Don't fall short of * Heathens, who knew this and observed it as their rule, and have branded such who deviate from it, be careful thou put not off a mercy that lives many years with thee with a dayes entertainment, or weeks, or months lodging with thee.

* φασιλλῶ θύμε. *Sordidum & tenuem sumptum hoc adagio significabant.* Erasm. *Adagior. chil.* 2. *cent.* 7. *Ad.* 35.

Secondly, *Be careful that thou make thy Vow so, that they may be thy witnesses whom God makes*, be careful thou make them witnesses of thy performing, whom God made witnesses of thy streits, and thou madest witnesses of thy Vowes. A man that would have his credit in his truth to his word kept up, would choose them witnesses of his performing, who were witnesses of his promise; I think *David* took this heed in his rendring and paying his Vowes, *I will do it* (saith he) *now in the presence of his people*, Vers. 14. The people were witnesses to his streights, Prayers and Vowes, and he will honour Religion by performing in their sight what he sealed, signed and delivered, what he Vowed to the Lord. *Seek not more than providence makes conscious to thy Vowes lest this be interpreted ostentation*, and vain, self-glorying, *take so many, lest the good example be lost, or thou suspected of falsifying thy Vow.* Briefly and plainly, dost thou on a sick bed make thy Vow before thy Family? before the Neighbourhood! be careful to perform it before them, let them see thou art what thou Vowedst to be. This care in thy Vow will be a means to make it most to the advantage of Religion, whilst all that heard or knew thy Vow, bear thee testimony that thou art thankful; and more thou seekest not, lest thou be suspected to be proud: thus Religions gratitude and humility are set forth; thus thou givest others occasion to glorifie thy Father who is in Heaven.

Use 2. Do well advised and composed Vowes so much promote Religion, when well and faithfully kept: are they also such sacred and inviolable bonds? *Then look what Vowes you are under, look how you have performed them.* It is time to view what you fairly promised for advancing

vancing of Religion, and what you have faithfully performed for its real advantage. Christian consider with thy self, wast thou ever in more than ordinary distress? didst thou not then Vow largely? tell me what were thy Vowes? how hast thou paid them? wast thou ever in a poor, needy condition? didst thou not then Vow to honour God with thy increase, to inrich the poor, to relieve thine indigent brethren, and Gods poor Children? Now what hast thou done? who are cloathed out of thy flock? who are fed at thy table? who are lodged at thy charge? where's thy paying thy Vow? was it ever thy lot to be tossed at Sea? to be mounted up to the Heavens? to be cast down again into the depths? to be at thy wits end? didst thou not then Vow, if ever God should command, and make it a calm, and bring thee to thy desired Haven, thou would'st be more circumspect in all manner of conversation, more vigilant to thy particular duty? more severe against thy particular sin? Didst thou not Vow that an Anniversary Sermon, with an allowance to the Poor, or a constant Lecture, or an Almes-house, or some such great standing Monument, should commemorate Gods goodness to thee, and perswade others to trust and seek unto that goodness? or at least if thy Estate would not do so much, hast thou not Vowed to do according to thy power? where now is thy paying these Vows? But I was never poor, never at Sea: may be so, yet art thou not under some Vows for some other mercies? wast thou never in danger of losing thy Estate, thy Relations, thy life? Dideſt thou never lie dangerously and (men thought) desperately sick? hast thou no sick-bed Vowes upon thee? stay here whoever thou art that readest these lines, and read not a word more, until thou hast duely considered whether ever thou hast been dangerously sick? and what thou then Vowedst? and how thou hast performed?

The proud contemner of Religion learns by his dangerous sickness to promise to be religious; wast thou ever such? didst thou ever so Vow? and art thou now what thou didst then promise? The prophane swearer and blasphemer is brought by a sickness to fear his Oath, and to Vow to learn to fear and abstain. Oh then, if God will not destroy, and damn, but give life! he will, that he will repent, and amend; he will bless, but not blaspheme his Name; he will never more prophanely swear, and curse, wast thou ever such a one? so sinful? so engaged? what performance now? The Drunkard Vowes sobriety when he is sick; the Adulterer Vowes chastity; the worldling Vowes to mind Heaven; the Tradesman who hath so often

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ten sold his conscience at every price to gain six pence, by an untruth and lye, then if this plunge be out-lived, will keep a good conscience. In a word, *A sick bed makes a sinner sick of his sin, and seldome fails to make him Vow against it.* Now Reader what thinkest thou? Vowes or no Vowes? art thou under any or no? I am perswaded now thou canst not deny it; methinks I could believe I heard thee say, such a Fever, such an Ague, the small Pox, a Surfet, the Pestilence, or some such disease, made me Vow to be another man, to destroy sin, to exercise grace, to love God, to hate lust, to be holy and heavenly. Now thou seest thy bond, where is thy payment of thy debt? Oh how few do well keep any, how much fewer do well keep their sick bed Vowes, as if these Vowes were as sickly as their makers, and doomed to as short a life as the sick Votary thought he had been doomed to. Reader thy conscience tells thee what thou canst answer, or what thou must confess in this matter, and upon thy consciences answer I have advice for thee if thou art conscious.

1. *Of total neglect, go speedily on thy knees, bless infinite patience, humble thy self before infinite grace, get out thy pardon,* and whilst God saith by me, by these lines defer not to pay, be thou honest to thy word, thankful to thy God, advantageous to Religion, and an example of reformation, lest next sickness be thy death, and thy Vowes be thy sin, which shut out thy hopes of praying and speeding: God delights not to answer such fools, thou maist find Motives enough to hasten thee to this duty, from *Eccl.* 5. 2, 4, 5, 6, which I commend to thy thoughts with these Quæries.

1. *Is not God in Heaven and thou on earth.*
2. And, *Is not thy Vow made to this great God?*
3. And, *Is not this Vow thy voluntary debt?* And
4. *Doth God require present payment?* Or indeed
5. *Wilt thou worse thy condition by Vowing?* Or
6. *Wilt thou provoke Gods anger and displeasure?*
7. *Dar'st thou venture on threatned destruction?*

These are *Solomon's* Motives to a punctual and present payment of Vowes; I offer them to awake thee from neglect of thy Vowes.

Or, Secondly, *Hast thou Vowed? and performed in part but not fully?* hast thou done somewhat! but not all of that thou hast promised, and Vowed? I advise,

1. *See what hindred, wast thou rash in promising more than thou could'st*

couldst do, is this the reason thou didst not all, because some of it was out of thy power; thou must be humbled for thy rash vow, and if ever it comes within thy power, do it.

2. *See whether thy sloth and negligence did not hinder, when thou mightest have performed*, but now it is out of thy power, and thou canst not, this is a high breach of thy Vows, and I know no way for thee, but due and seasonable repentance, and confessing that God may pardon thee, and be thou better in what thou canst, since thou canst not be so good in this as thou shouldest.

3. *See whether it continue yet in thy power to do, though as yet thou hast not done it*, and if so, be affected with the sight of thy unthankfulness, but remove this sin by performing thy Vows, for God will not release the promise, nor cancell the bond, until the debt be paid by him who hath power in his hand, and may do it.

But, *What if it were in my power when I vowed, but since that time Providence hath put it out of my power*; I was rich, when I vowed to relieve the poor, but when I was recovered, God suffered me to be spoiled, as *Job* was, what shall I do then? *Dub.*

1. *Thy Vow well composed, engaged thee, so far as it was in thy power.* Remember, a well-advised Vow hath this expres condition, or this implied, so far, and so long as it is in my power to do, untill I have done all. The tenth of all I have, of all that God shall give me, saith *Jacob*, I will give to God. Now if the Lord exercise his bounty to *Jacob*, *Jacob* is engaged, then he hath power, and can do it: if God make *Jacob* poor, the limitation his Vow implied in it doth quit him. *Sol.* 1.

Secondly, *So far as God puts it out of thy power, so far he releaseth thee from the debt.* When God, by his Providence over-ruling all, doth disable thee to the payment; then he dischargeth thee from the bond, this is Gods real discharge, and cancelling of the Obligation. *Sol.* 2.

Are well composed Vows such promoters of Religion? and are they to be made so warily? and do they bind so strictly? *Then be sure to wait until God give you just and fit seasons for Vowing*, be not over-hasty to Vow, it is an inconsiderate and foolish haste of Christians, to make more occasions of Vowing, than God doth make for them; *Make* your Vows, *and spare not, so often as God bids you, but do not do it oftner*; you would wonder I should dissuade from Vowing often, when you have such constant mercies, and wonder well you might, if God did expect your extraordinary bond and se- *Use* 3.

curity for every ordinary mercy; but he requires it not, he is content with ordinary security of gratitude for ordinary mercies, *when* he calls for extraordinary security and acknowledgment, by giving extraordinary mercies, then give it, and do it.

1. *Chearfully, enter such bonds willingly.*
2. *Pay the bond punctually at its time.*
3. *Pay it fully, in the whole of it, so do it; that you may say, I will chearfully*, and of choice, so do it, that that you may call it a *paying punctually and fully*. And this will be accounted a rendring to the Lord, and a real promoting of Religion, by setting forth our debt, and the Lords goodness, to which we are indebted; Fear not to give thy God double security when he requires it. Fail not to pay readily and fully, when pay day comes, for the Lord doth expect and command thee so to do, and if thou do wilfully *make default*, he will lay folly to thy charge, and take the forfeiture of thy bond, and make thee know it too, some way or other to thy grief and trouble; keep out so long, or get out of such debts so soon as thou canst. Pay the Lord thy Vows.

How

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How are we Compleat in Christ?

Col. 3. last clause of vers. 11.

But Christ is all, and in all.

THE great concernment of lost creatures, is above all things to mind salvation, this is the *one thing needful*, this should be the great *enquiry*, and in the neglect of this, all our other endeavours are no better than laborious trifles. The great danger which even they are in, who seriously mind salvation, is, lest they build upon some sandy foundation, seeking Heaven in those wayes which lead not thither. The great design of Satan is, either to detain poor undone creatures in a total neglect of salvation, or to deceive them in the way and means thereof: 'tis therefore the great care of the Apostle, as in other Scripture, so in this, not only to undeceive the world, as to those mistakes which prevailed then, but to point out the right, the proper, the onely sure way of salvation, *viz.* through Christ, whom he here declares to be so compleat a Saviour, that as we have *none other*, so we need none other, because *Christ is all*. Luke 10. 42. Act. 16. 30. Act. 4. 12.

In the former part of the verse, the Apostle shews the insufficiency of all things on this side Christ, to commend us unto God, or stand us instead in the matter of salvation, and this he does by removing four mistakes (at that time) common.

1. The mistake of the *Jews*, who prided themselves in a genealogical kind of sanctity, as being the seed of *Abraham*, this they account so great a matter, that they cannot be perswaded it could go otherwise than well with them: let the Messengers of God tell them their sins, warn them of their dangers, yet they shelter themselves under this priviledge, as that which would be a sufficient bulwark against all kind of threats and comminations; and though

Mat. 3. 9. Joh. 8. 39,44. *John* the Baptist in his time; our Saviour in his time; and the Apostles in theirs, do all concurr in taking them off from leaning upon this broken reed; yet will they not be beaten out of these strong holds. Time was indeed when salvation was of the *Jews*; but that wall of partition being now taken down, and the pale of the Church so far enlarged, as to take in both *Jew* and *Gentile*, *Act.* 10. 34. no National priviledge can now commend us unto God; nor can a succession of *Abraham*, according to the flesh, avail us, unless we succeed him in his faith.

2. The mistake of the circumcised, whether *Jews* or Proselytes; who, because they had this badge of Religion upon them, concluded themselves in a priority for Heaven, before all the world besides. But however time was when Circumcision was an *Ordinance of* that necessity, that the Lord threatens to punish *the neglect thereof*, by cutting off that soul from among his people: yet was *it not the* outward but spiritual part, God accounted of. The Apostle in excluding this, excludes all outward religious Observations, as *Davenant, in loc.*

Gen. 17. 14. Rom. 2. 29. *Circumcisio erat in Judaica Religione ritus præcipuus adhibetur, itaque ad designandam observationem omnium rituum Legalium.*

3. The mistake of the *Grecians*, who were at that time the Masters of all Learning; and all other Nations in contradistinction unto them, were stiled *Barbarians*; and of all *Barbarians*, the *Scythians* were esteemed the rudest. But whatever worth and excellency may be in humane accomplishments, yet all these, in the business of salvation, are but poor matters. 'Tis neither the having nor wanting of these, that can considerably advantage or prejudice *us in that high* concernment.

1 Cor. 1. 26, 27. Act. 10. 34. 1 Sam. 16. 7. 4. The common mistake of the world; who from their *rank* and quality in the world, are ready to promise themselves a more easie acceptance with God. But *God is no respecter of persons*: He looks upon the children of men with *another kind of eye, than* man is used to do. Whether our outward condition be high or mean, there's nothing of priviledge or disadvantage from hence, in respect of salvation.

And as in the former clause of the Verse, the Apostle shews the insufficiency of all things besides Christ; so in this clause he shews the single sufficiency of Christ alone. Whatever the *Jews* promised themselves from their stock and lineage; the Proselytes from their Circumcision; the *Grecians* from their wisdom and learning; the great ones of the world from their outward preheminencies, all that, yea, and much more, is Christ to Believers. *Christ is All*

This

This single sufficiency of Christ, the Apostle proves by a double Argument.

1. The compleatness and perfection of Christ as a Saviour, *He is All.* Take salvation from first to last, in all the several parts of it, he is the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginner and perfecter, the Author and finisher of all. Heb. 12. 2.

2. The way and means whereby Christ imparts and communicates this salvation, it is by being in all. Some read the words as an amplification of the fulness and compleatness of Christ, *Christ is All*, and that in *all things* that concern either our present comfort, or eternal happiness. Others refer these words *In all*, to those divers sorts of persons spoke of in the former part of this Verse; to whom, that Christ may be a Saviour, he disdains not to take up his dwelling in their souls, though lying under all the disadvantages which were then accounted prejudicial. And thus the Apostle seems to explain himself, *Gal.* 3. 28. a parallel Scripture unto this. And according to this Exposition, as the benefit of Christs sufficiency is extended to all believers by virtue of their union unto him, so is it restrained and locked up from all unbelievers.

ἐν πᾶσιν ἢ πρόγραμμον ἢ τοῖς τῆς ζωῆς ἡμῶν συμπλεκόμενοις ἢ ἐν πᾶσιν ἡμῖν. Oec. in loc. *In omnibus, i.e. fidelibus hunc in modum sanctificatis, & Christo copulatis.* Daven. in loc. *Quod lex bona est, nostrum non est, quod autem male vivimus, nostrum est, & nihil utiq; prodest quod lex est bona, si vita & conversatio nostra non est bona. Lex enim bona muneris est Christi, vita autem non bona criminis nostri, imo hominis culpabilis sumus, si legem bonam celimus & mali cultores sumus. Quin potius non cultores si mali, quia culpa dici non potest malus cultor, &c.* Salvian. *de Gubern. Dei. l.* 4.

The Case to be insisted on from this Scripture is, How Christians are compleat in Christ? For the resolving hereof, take this natural deduction from the words;

Doct. That Christ is a Christians All. By Christian I mean, not them who have nothing more to declare them such, than only their Baptisms and outward professions, as the Church of *Sardis*, Rev. 3. 1. We account them Monsters in nature, who have the faces of men, but in their other limbs, the lineaments and proportions of brute beasts; and how can we account them better than Monsters in Christianity, who have the faces of Christians indeed, but withall the hearts and lives of Pagans. That *All* which is in Christ, is nothing unto such, except to encrease their guilt, and heighten their condemnation. But by the *Christian*, I mean him who is ἀληθῶς Ἰσραελίτης, *an Israelite indeed*, as Christ speaks concerning *Nathanael*, † *Joh.* 1. 48. One who labours more to be than seem religious; one whose great care is, that his heart may keep an even pace with his tongue, in all his outward professions; now to such, Christ is *All*. In having an interest in him, they have enough for the supply of all wants; for the prevention of all dangers; for the procuring all good: And therefore what the Apostle speaks here in one word, *Christ is All*, he speaks at large, in an enumeration of several weighty

weighty particulars, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. *Who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.* We are foolish *creatures*; *Christ is wisdom*: We are guilty; He is *righteousness*: We are polluted; He is *sanctification*: We are lost and undone; but in him is *redemption*: We are empty of all good; but He is a full fountain, from whom flow all those blessings which concern either our present comfort, or future happiness: We are necessitous and indigent; *in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*, Col. 2. 3. *Yea*, in him *dwells the fulness of the Godhead bodily*, and *ye are compleat in him*, Col. 2. 9, 10. Or as you have it, *Col.* 1. 19. In him dwells all fulness. The rich Merchant thought himself no loser by the bargain, in parting with all he had to purchase an interest in Christ, *Matth.* 13. 45, 46. But when never so much is said, there cannot a greater word be used than what the Apostle speaks here, *Christ is All.* The Greeks were wont of old to account it an excellency to speak much in few words; to give their Auditors θάλασσαν σταγόνων ἐν σμιλύγγοις ἐμοῦσιν, an Ocean of matter in a drop of words. Thus does the Apostle here give us (as I may speak) gold in the wedge; which I shall endeavour to beat out into the leaf, by shewing how much is comprized in this one word *All.* The two names by which the most ancient Philosophers were wont to speak of God were, that he was, τὸ ὂν καὶ τὸ ἀγαθὸν, the true being and the universal good; all the scattered excellencies which are dispersed among several ranks of creatures, meeting in him, as the lines of the Circumference in the Center; This does the Apostle speak here of Christ, *He is All.* Physicians speak of an universal medicine suited to all diseases, and helpful in all maladies: but whether this can be found in nature or not; yet certainly Christ *is* a *Panacea*, in him we have a plaister for all sores, a remedy against all distempers. There are indeed thousands of cases wherein all other helps are but *miserable comforters*, and *Physicians of no value*: but not one case wherein Christ is not a full and proper help. When all that friends can do, is to pity us, he can help us; because *Christ is All.*

τὸν τὸ πλήρωμα

For the further explaining and confirming of this great truth, three things shall be spoke to,

1. Wherein Christ is All.
2. How Christ is All.
3. What advantage it is to sincere Christians, to have their All in Christ.

1. Wherein Christ is All. In general, He is All in All things; for

for ſo ſome of no ſmall account render the following words, and is *All*, as hath already been hinted. But more particularly,

1. Chriſt is All to ſincere Chriſtians, to free them from whatever might hinder their ſalvation. *Salvation* is not a meer negative thing, nor does it conſiſt in a bare exemption from hell and wrath, but a tranſlation into heaven and glory; but alas! betwixt us and glory, there is μέγα χάσμα, a great Gulph, many bars and impediments; aye but Chriſt is All to deliver us from theſe; and though our deliverance in this world is not compleat or perfect, yet is it ſo far compleat as to render our ſalvation undoubtful, if we be in the number of them to whom Chriſt is here ſaid to be All.

1. The wrath of an offended God, which, like that flaming ſword that kept our Apoſtate Parents from returning into Paradiſe (out of which, becauſe of their Apoſtacy they had been ejected) would render our admiſſion into heaven equally impoſſible; but Chriſt, by bearing the wrath of God in his own perſon, hath taken it off from ours; and therefore he is ſaid to *deliver us from the wrath to come*, 1 *Theſſ.* 1. 10. He who was the Son of Gods love, became the ſubject of his diſpleaſure, as appears by comparing *Matth.* 3. 17. with *Iſa.* 53. 10. that we who were children of wrath, might become the objects of his favour; and however Chriſt hath not delivered believers from the anger of God as a Father, yet from the anger of God as a Judge. There is an anger that proceeds from love, as the anger of a Parent towards that child whoſe good he deſires; and there is a vindictive anger: the former believers are neither freed from, nor would it indeed be their privilege; there is not a greater judgment can befall poor ſinful creatures here on earth, than for God not to diſcover himſelf angry with them for their ſins, *Iſa.* 1. 5. God then deals with men as a skilful Phyſician with an unruly Patient, whom he gives up as deſperate, or as a tender Parent with a graceleſs child, whom he utterly rejects. In a word, whatever kind of anger might tend to the prejudice of believers, that they are delivered from, but what is for their advantage that they are ſubject to. That Chriſt is All in delivering from the wrath of God may further be evidenced by theſe Conſiderations:

Heb. 12. 6, 7, 8, &c.

Magna ira eſt, quando peccantibus non irascitur Deus. Hieron.

1. The adequate of Gods wrath is ſin; there is this difference 'twixt wrath and mercy in God; that mercy flows (as I may ſo ſpeak) naturally from God, and hath no other motive but only the gracious and merciful diſpoſition of God; but wrath hath always its riſe from us, and nothing in us but ſin can draw down his wrath

wrath upon us. Our meanneſs cannot, our afflictions cannot; theſe may ſometimes be the effects of Gods wrath, but never the cauſes. No, 'tis *becauſe of theſe things the wrath of God cometh upon the children of diſobedience*, Eph. 5.6. *becauſe of theſe things. i. e.* becauſe of theſe ſins, as appears from the Verſes fore-going. What is it that hath filled every age and place of the world with ſo many dreadful *tokens* of Gods diſpleaſure, but onely ſin? What was it that caſt the Angels out of Heaven, and degraded them from *their firſt* ſtation, but onely ſin? What was it that drove our firſt Parents out of Paradiſe, and ſubjected them, and all their Poſterity to ſo many miſeries, but onely ſin? What was it that brought deſtruction upon the old World, upon *Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim*? What was it that broke off the natural branches, and hath for ſo many hundreds of years continued them under a divorce from God, *but onely* ſin? In a word, look over all thoſe miſeries under *which the whole* Creation groans, *Rom.* 8.22. And though thoſe miſeries in ſeveral creatures are divers, yet do they all proceed from the ſame fountain, *viz. Sin.*

2. Chriſt is All, in making expiation for ſin. He *is that Lamb of God that taketh away the ſins of the world*; John 1. 29. He is our ἱλασμὸς & ἱλαστήριον, 1 *Joh.* 2.2. *Rom.* 3.25. 'twas not *thouſands of Rams*, or *ten thouſands of Rivers of Oyl*, could have born any proportion in point of ſatisfaction for our ſins. 'Twas not all the Legal Sacrifices of old could do any thing, nor can all our duties now: but Chriſt is All in expiating for ſin, *Heb.* 10.5, 6, 7. compared *with Heb.* 10. 14. And ſuch is the fulneſs of Chriſts ſatisfaction, that he hath not onely freed ſuch as are united unto him from *condemnation*, *Rom.* 8.1. but purchaſed for them the Adoption of children, *Rom.* 8. 14, 15, 16. And thus Chriſt is All in removing this bar, and opening this door to ſalvation, which (had it not been *for his* mediation) would for ever have remained ſhut againſt all the children of men. The pollution and prevalency of corruption, how great an impediment this is to ſalvation and happineſs, was typified by the Lepers and unclean perſons of old, who were not admitted within the *Camp*. Heaven is no common receptacle for all perſons, as *Noah's* Ark was for all ſorts of creatures, *Know ye not that the unrighteous ſhall not inherit the Kingdome of God*, 1 Cor. 6.9. Know ye not? if you know any thing in Religion, you cannot but know thus much. In the Church of God on earth, there is a mixture of *Corn* with *Chaff*, of *Wheat with Tares*, of good Fiſh with bad, of

Lev. 13.46.

Sheep

Sheep with *Goats*; but there shall be a separation of the precious from the vile, and God will come with his *Fan in his hand and throughly purge his floar*, Luke 3. 17. Do but consider and pause a while upon that mischief which sin hath done poor creatures by its pollution. How hath it stained their glory? cast them down from their excellency? turned Angels into Devils, and debased man, who was once almost the top of the whole Creation, in whom all the scattered Excellencies in the Book of Nature were bound up together in one Volume, and met together in a blessed union: How unlike hath sin made us to what God at first made us? Those souls of ours which were once as so many pure beams of Light, how is the beauty of them now blotted and darkned? But Christ is that *Fountain opened for sin and uncleanness*, Zech. 13. 1. in his blood is vertue enough to fetch out *scarlet* spots, and *crimson* stains, *Isa.* 1. 18. and if any of the children of men perish in their pollutions, 'tis not because he wants sufficiency, but because they want faith. Christ is *All* in the business of cleansing and purifying. But alas, besides the pollution of sin, there is the prevalency of it. This was to St. *Paul* so great an affliction, that he who could bear the greatest of outward afflictions patiently, 2 *Cor.* 11. 23, 24, 25, *&c.* cannot but expsess something of an holy impatience under this burden, *Rom.* 7. 24. he that could triumph over *Principalities*, *Powers*, *Life*, *Death*, &c. *Rom.* 8. 38, 39. is yet more than a little discouraged when he reflects upon the corruptions he found lodging in his own heart. Corruption is the great Tyrant that hath usurped over the whole world, the bounds of its Dominion are almost as large as all mankinde, there is not a man in all the world (except the first man *Adam* made after Gods Image, and the second *Adam* who was God as well as man, but he is born a slave, a vassal to this Usurper: The four great successive Monarchies, *Chaldean*, *Persian*, *Grecian*, *Roman*, though the extent of them were great, and the circumference vast, yet were all these limited and bounded, some parts of the world there were which knew nothing of their yoke. But alas the Empire of Corruption reaches every corner of the earth, every person born into the world. We may therefore not unfitly compare it to *Nebuchadnezzars* Tree, *Dan.* 4. 11. the top whereof reaches Heaven, from thence it threw the Angels, and the boughs thereof spreading themselves to the ends of the earth; yea, this vassallage unto Corruption, as it is the largest and universalest, so also the miserablest and most dreadful. All other slaveries com- John 3. 16.

pared with this, are but like *Rehoboams* Government compared to his Father *Solomons*, the *least finger* of whose Dominion, he threatens, should be *heavier than his Fathers loyns*, 1 King 12. 10. We read in Scripture of an *Egyptian* slavery; in History of the *Spartan* slavery, and of the *Turkish*, all these sad and lamentable; but yet all these reached but the body, and that for a time only, whereas the slavery of Corruption reaches the soul, and that for ever, unless Christ become our Jesus in saving us from our sins, *Mat.* 1. 21. He hath purchased our freedome, and that with a great summe, as the Centurion speaks of his *Roman* freedome, *Act.* 22. 26, 27, 28. There are none can say with St. *Paul*, they are born free, except they who are born again, and they are free indeed, *Joh.* 8. 36. Christ is All in removing this impediment also, in setting our poor captive souls at liberty, from the bonds and fetters of our corruption, *Rom.* 6. 6, 7, 8, &c. *Rom.* 7. 25. 'Tis he alone can conquer these great *Goliahs*, these untamed affections; but yet even this deliverance is also incompleat in this world, he delivers his people from corruption as to the reign and dominion of it, though not as to the presence and disturbance of it, *ut non regnet sed manum ut non sit.*

3. The oppositions of Satan, his wiles and subtilties, these are another impediment, and that no small one neither; for if our first Parents in whom there was nothing of ignorance, but a sufficiency of knowledge, there was indeed a nescience of many things, so is there also in the Angels, *Mat.* 24. 36. but yet their knowledge was both full and clear in things necessary and pertinent, *Col.* 3. 10. This was no small advantage against the methods of Satan, because his usual way of mischieving poor creatures hath not been so much by force as fraud, not as a Lyon, but as a Serpent, not so much by conquering, as cheating, acting all his enmity under a pretence of friendship, and tempting us to no evil, but under the pretence of some good. The advantage of our first Parents was in this respect great, in respect of their knowledge. Besides in them was nothing of weakness, but a sufficiency of strength, in them was nothing of corruption, but an universal rectitude and uprightness. The wayes by which Satan ordinarily prevails, is either by our ignorance, or by our weakness, or else by making a party within us against our selves. The advantages of our first Parents were in all these respects far greater than any have against Satan now, yet Satan prevailed against them. What cause therefore have we to fear, 2. *Cor.* 11. 3.

But

But *Christ is all* to free us from these dangers, to carry us through these oppositions, who *hath led captivity captive*, Ephes. 4. 8. *Who hath spoiled Principalities and powers, and triumphed over them*, Col. 2. 15. but yet even this diliverance is at present incompleat; for, though Christ hath delivered Believers from Satan as a *destroyer*, yet not from Satan as a *tempter*, he may disquiet such, but he cannot ruine them.

4. The disturbances and interruptions of a prophane world, its allurements, discouragements, promises, threats, smiles, frowns, our difficulties and dangers from hence cannot be little, since the people of God in all ages have found them so great: the great advantage which all these outward things have against us, is their suitableness to our senses; for though believers are said *to live by faith*, Heb. 10. 38. yet the best of men have had something to witness they were but men *of like passions*; as 'twas said of *Elias*, James 5. 17. but *Christ is all* to free us from these dangers, *Joh.* 16. 33. *Be of good cheer I have overcome the world*: He hath overcome it *for us*, and in some measure in us. *ἐμοὶ παθεῖν.*

2. *Christ is All*, to fill the souls of believers with all that good which may capacitate and qualifie them for happiness: it is the decree of Heaven, that none be admitted into glory, but those on whom God hath wrought the truth of grace; Heaven must first be brought down into our souls, before our souls are capable of ascending up thither: we must first *be made meet*, before we *can partake of that inheritance of the Saints in light*, Col. 1. 12. with *Ephes.* 5. 5. we are by nature unmeet, because we are carnal and earthly; and should God dispence with his own decree, and open so wide a door unto Heaven and happiness, as to let in carnal and sensual persons, Heaven would be no Heaven unto such; carnal hearts can never relish the sweetness of spiritual enjoyments. Philosophers observe, that all delight arises from a suitableness betwixt the person and the object. What is the reason of that diversity of delights which is among the children of men, that which is one mans joy is another mans grief, and that which is one mans pleasure is another mans pain? the only reason is, because of the diversity of tempers and dispositions: Some there be of such a bruitish and swinish temper, that nothing is so pleasing unto them as wallowing in the mire of their sensualities; others again of so refined a temper that they esteem these sensual pleasures very low and much beneath them, but still every mans delight is according to his temper and disposition, Rom. 8. 6, 7.

and therefore Heaven would be ſo far from being a Heaven unto ſuch, that it would be a kind of Hell to them; for as *delight ariſes* from an harmony betwixt the perſon and the object, ſo all *kind of* torment from an unſuitableneſs and contrariety: hence is it, that although God vouchſafes us ſomething of Heaven here on earth, *viz.* in his Ordinances, yet to unheavenly hearts every thing of this nature is a *tedium*, a burden: *When will the new Moon be gone that we may ſell Corn? and the Sabbath that we may ſet forth wheat*, &c. Amos 8. 5. *Ælian* reports of one *Nicoſtratus*, who being a skilful Artificer and finding a curious piece of Art, was ſo much taken therewith, that a ſpectator beholding him ſo intent in viewing the workmanſhip, asked him what pleaſure he could take in gazing ſo long upon ſuch an object? he anſwers, hadſt thou my eyes thou wouldſt be as much raviſhed as I am. So may we ſay of carnal *perſons, had* they the hearts and diſpoſitions of believers, they would *be as much* delighted with all means of ſcommunion with God as they are, and account that their priviledge which now they eſteem their vexation: the Greeks tell us, that Καλὸν good, is derived ἀπὸ τῆς κλήσεως, from calling, becauſe all good is of an attractive and magnetick *nature*, to draw forth and call our affections after it; but yet 'tis not the intrinſecal excellency of any object that renders it taking with us, but our affections are accordingly exerciſed upon all kind of objects, as repreſentations are of thoſe objects from the underſtanding, for 'tis the underſtanding which fits at the ſtern of the ſoul, that is the *primum mobile*, the maſter-wheel that puts the affections *as ſo many* leſſer wheels upon motion; therefore unleſs our judgements be both enlightned and ſanctified, we can never *approve the things that are excellent*. Naturaliſts obſerve, that though the Loadſtone hath an attractive virtue to draw Iron to it, yet it cannot exerciſe that virtue upon Iron that's ruſty. Ignorance is the *ruſt of the* ſoul, that blunts the edge of our affections to whatſoever is ſpiritually good: there muſt be therefore ſome kind of ſuitableneſs and harmony betwixt our ſouls and heavenly mercies, before we are capable of taſting the ſweetneſs of them. Now *Chriſt is All* to believers in this reſpect alſo, 'tis *from his fulneſs they receive and grace for grace*, Joh. 1. 16. That we have any thing of grace it is from him, and that we have ſuch a degree or meaſure of grace it is from him: *I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly*, Joh. 10. 10. the eſſence and the abundance are both from him. All thoſe miracles which Chriſt wrought in the dayes of his

his flesh upon the bodies of poor creatures, in restoring sight to the blind, speech to the dumb, life to the dead, all these does Christ work over again upon the souls of them whom he prepares for Heaven. Ephes. 5. 8. Ephes. 2. 5, 10.

3. *Christ is All* to fill all Ordinances with power and efficacy; these are the means of salvation, and through his concurrence effectual means, as they are his institutions, we are under an obligation of using them; and as they have the promise of his presence, we are warranted in our expectations of benefit from them: but yet Ordinances are but empty pipes, but dry breasts, unless Christ be pleased to fill them, who *filleth All in All*, Ephes. 1. 23. That there should be such a might and efficacy in things so weak, such miraculous and strange effects by means so inconsiderable, that the foolishness of preaching should be powerful to salvation; 'tis because it is not man but God that speaks. *Joh.* 5. 25. *The hour is coming and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.* Look upon Ordinances in themselves and so they are τὰ μὴ ὄντα, *things that are not*; but as they are accompanied with the power of Christ, *so they bring to nought things that are*, 1 Cor. 1. 28. 'Tis he who in Baptism baptises with the Holy Ghost and with fire, *Matth.* 3. 11. 'Tis he in preaching the Word, speaks not onely to the ear but the heart, *Luke* 24. 32. *Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?* In a word, *Christ is All* in every Ordinance in respect of efficacy; whiles the Disciples fished alone *they caught nothing*, but when Christ is with them, the draught of fishes is so great they are scarce able to draw it, *Joh.* 21. 3, 6. Matth. 28. 20. Matth. 18. 20.

4. *Christ is All* to fill every condition with comfort, the best of conditions is not good without him, nor is the worst bad with him. *Alexander* accounted himself to live so many dayes as he obtained victories: but *David* accounts himself to live more in one dayes communion with God, than in a thousand dayes enjoyment of all earthly comforts, *Psal.* 84. 10. yea in the midst of all his earthly confluences, he looks upon all as nothing in comparison of communion with God, *Psal.* 73. 25. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.* Though he had a Kingdom he values not that; and well might *David* be of this mind, for could we adde Kingdom to Kingdom, and world to world, yet all these in comparison of the least smile or love-token from God, are no better than nothing, for *thy loving kindness is better than life*, *Psal.* *Ubi bene sine te, aut ubi male cum te* Bern. *Non dicit nihil habeo sed nihil concupisco,* Musc. *in loc.*

Psal. 63. 3. The ancient Philosophers distinguished betwixt *bona καθ' αὑτα* and *bona καθ' τίμην*, some things good in their own nature, thus onely God, *Matth.* 19. 17. *There is none good but one, that is God:* others good by way of opinion or estimation, and thus all the Comforts of this life; whence that maxime of the Stoicks, *βίος ὑπόληψις*, life is but opinion and phancie, and whatever good is in these things, is but like those pictures of most deformed and monstrous creatures, which the Poet tells us had no other beauty than what they owed to the Painters courtesie, *viz.* the off-spring of our own phancies: Those who were vertuous, were only by the Philosophers accounted to live, others might *degere*, but not *vivere*, they might be, but they could not live. The onely true comfort of life consists in living in communion with God, 'tis his presence fills Heaven with all its glory, and 'tis his presence that fills every condition with all its sweetness: But alas, *how can two walk together except they be agreed?* and what agreement can there be betwixt light and darkness, the glorious Majesty of Heaven and sinful dust, but only through a Mediator? and the only *Mediator is Jesus Christ*. What was it that enabled the blessed Martyrs, *to account* the scorching flames to be beds of Roses? What was it that enabled St. *Paul* to triumph over all kind of adversaries? but only the *love of God in Christ Jesus*; herein alone consists our comfort, our happiness. Now *Christ is All* in this respect also.

Amos 3. 3.

1 Tim. 2. 5.

Rom. 8. 38, 39.

5. *Christ is All*, in furnishing us with strength and assistance to persevere: the way to Heaven is no smooth or easie way, but beset with many difficulties, πολυμυθὴ ὁδὸς. *Matth.* 7. 14. and *through many tribulations must we enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, Act. 14. 22. yea though the calmness of our passage through this world should be in a perfect serenity from all outward enemies, yet can we not expect a total freedom from the worst of enemies, our own hearts, our corruptions. All the prejudices and mischiefs we either do or can suffer from others, are nothing to what we suffer from our selves, 'tis not *homo hominis lupus*, but *homo sibi lupus*, men are to none such Wolves as to their own souls. Now in as much as the Crown of happiness is reserved for the head of perseverance, and in as much as perseverance in conflicting with such kind of adversaries, as though we conquer them, yet they are in us, and though we vanquish them, yet still we carry them about us, must needs require a greater strength than our own: it cannot but be esteemed an eminent priviledge, to be under the continual supplies of Christ by his Spirit,

Rev. 2. 10.

Rom. 8. 24.

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Spirit, that after *we have put our hand to Gods plough we may not look back*, and after we have *begun in the Spirit*, we may not *end in the flesh*. I speak not this as doubting the perseverance of them who are sincere, but as declaring the true foundation on which their perseverance is bottom'd, *viz.* not any inherent strength they have in themselves, but those supplies of grace and strength they continually derive from Christ: there is a vast difference 'twixt the best of Christians considered singly in themselves, and considered relatively in respect of their union unto Christ: in themselves so weak and impotent that they *can do nothing*, Joh. 15. 5. not *sufficient of themselves to think any thing as of themselves*, 2 Cor. 3. 5. and yet what can be less than to think? but in Christ mighty and powerful, able to do and bear whatever God would have them, *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me*, Phil. 4. 13. and thus *is Christ* the Christians *All*, thus are they *compleat in him*. Luke 9. 26. Gal. 3. 3. *Non dicis, parum potestis facere, vel difficulter potestis facere, vel nihil potestis perficere, sed nihil facere.* Aug. in loc. Col. 2. 10.

2. How *Christ is all?* The resolution of this Quære is therefore necessary, because many there are who instead of sucking milk from this Doctrine are ready to suck poyson; but for prevention of all dangerous and unsafe inferences from this great truth, consider

1. Negatively, how *Christ* is not *All*; not so as to excuse us from all endeavours in the use of means for *working out our own salvation*. Christs sufficiency does not excuse but ingage our industry: for thus the Apostle argues, *Phil.* 2. 12, 13. *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling, because it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do*, q. d. it is God does all, therefore do you what you can.

2. Positively or affirmatively, and that in these two respects especially.

1. *Christ is All* by way of *Impetration*, in as much as our salvation was his purchase; we may say of our hopes, our helps, our advantages, as the Chief Priest said of the moneys which *Judas* had received for the hire of his perfidiousness: *It is the price of blood*, Matth. 27. 6. Whence is it that they who have brought themselves under the deserts of Hell, may have hopes of Heaven? enjoy the means of Heaven? taste the first fruits of Heaven? all are the price of Christs blood: 'twas by his own blood that he entred into Heaven himself, and hath opened the door to Heaven for all that are incorporated into him, *Heb.* 9. 12. *Heb.* 10. 19, 20. Eph. 5. 25, 26, 27. Act. 20. 28. John 15. 13.

2. *Christ is all* by way of *Application*, in as much as he brings home the blessings he hath purchased unto the souls of his; he hath not.

not onely purchased salvation for *them*, but *them* for it; not only the possibility of Heaven, but a real propriety in it: and certainly propriety is absolutely necessary unto the refreshment of every comfort: What are all the treasures of either or both the *Indies*, to him who only hears of them? but meer stories. What all the glory of Heaven to him who is thrust from the enjoyment of them? but meer torments. There must be a propriety in all spiritual blessings before they can be refreshing: and this alone from Christ. *I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto my self, that where I am ye may be there also.* And what is clearly asserted in these Scriptures, is strongly intimated in those emblems by which Christ is described. What the root is to the Tree, the Vine to the branches, the head to the body, all this is Christ to believers, *viz.* not only a treasury of all good, but a fountain continually streaming down all kind of spiritual blessings into their souls: and though faith be both the eye that discerns, and the hand that receives all from Christs fulness, yet 'tis he that by his Spirit works this grace in us. Faith is our *act*, but it is his *gift*; 'tis we that believe, but 'tis Christ enables us to believe: so that both in purchasing and applying salvation *Christ is All.*

John 10. 28. John 14. 3. Col. 2. 7. John 15. 1, 5. Eph. 1. 22, 23. Gal. 5. 22. Eph. 2. 8. Phil. 1. 29.

3. What advantage is it to believers to have their *All* in Christ?

1. Because our salvation could have been in no hand so safe, so sure as in the hand of Christ: had it been in our hand by any inherent righteousness, our sad experience we have had of our own unfaithfulness, in sinning away that happiness wherein we were created, may cause us for ever to be jealous of our selves; but to have it in the hand of him who is mighty to save even to the utmost, who is so faithful that in all our distresses he is touched with our infirmities; we cannot be so sensible of our own miseries, but Christ is much more: and hence it is that as we have no other Saviour besides him, so is it impossible we should have any like unto him.

Psal. 89. 19. Isa. 63. 1. Heb. 4. 15. Heb. 7. 25. Act. 4. 12.

2. Because our salvation could have been in no way so comfortable, because as God hath the *glory* of every attribute, so have Christians the *comfort* of every attribute in *this way* of salvation; for as God hath the glory of his Justice from them (in their Head and surety) to whom in *this way* he shews mercy; *mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other.* Justice it self that dreadful attribute to guilty creatures, is in *this way* of salvation so far from being their enemy that it becomes their friend,

Psal. 85. 10.

and

and speaks nothing but what is to their encouragement. And hence it is that sincere believers have from the very *justice* of God, answered all manner of discouragements arising from their sins. *Who is he that condemneth, it is Christ that died?* i. e. since God hath already received satisfaction from Christ, he cannot in *justice* require it from the members of Christ, but is *just* in the *justifying him that believeth in Jesus*; *and if we confess and forsake our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*: Thus hath the justice of God been their great support in the time of their outward dangers also, *Justice and Judgment are the habitation of his Throne.* In a word, this way of salvation (which was the contrivance of infinite wisdome, and is in it self so mysterious, that the Angels delight to look into it) does so fully correspond with the condition of poor, weak, sinful, mutable creatures, that it layes a double obligation of praise upon us, that salvation is possible, and that the way of salvation is so compleat and full. Rom. 8. 34. Rom. 3. 26. Prov. 28. 13. with 1 Joh. 1. 9. Psal. 89 14.

The Doctrinal part of this Observation being thus cleared, one word by way of Application.

Use 1. If Christ be All, then is there no ground of despondency either from your own defectiveness, or the defectiveness of all creature helps. Your duties are defective; your endeavours defective; your very righteousness unsafe to confide in; But though you have nothing in your selves, yet if you have an interest in Christ, you need nothing more, because in *Christ* you have *All*. Phil. 3. 9.

1. You have the summe of All. Though you have not estates, friends, worldly comforts; yet in Christ you have what does more than make up the want of all these. We may be as impatiently desirous of this and that earthly comfort, as *Rachel* was of children, whom we find quarrelling with *Jacob*, *Give me children, or else I dye.* But what *Elkanah* said to *Hannah* in the like condition, *Am I not better to thee than ten sons?* the same we may say much more to persons interested in Christ. Is not Christ better to you than all? The absence of the Cistern may well be dispensed with, by him who lives at the Fountain, and the light of a Candle, by him who enjoys the Sun. All those seeming contradictions, which so frequently occurr in Scripture, can no other wayes be reconciled, but by the acknowledgment of this, *E. gr. A father of the fatherless*: How can they be fatherless who have a father? Thus we read of them who were *rich* in the midst of *poverty*, who having *nothing*, *possessed All things*; joyful in the midst of sorrows, *i. e.* though they had Gen. 30. 1. 1 Sam. 1. 8. Psal. 68. 5. Jam. 2. 5. 2 Cor. 6. 10.

not these comforts, yet they had an interest in him who is infinitely more, and better than all those comforts. Nay, as to inherent righteousness, though you cannot attain a perfection, yet in Christ is perfection. He is All.

2. You have in him the pledge of All; according to the Apostles argumentation, *Rom.* 8. 32. *How shall he not with him also freely give us All things.* The Inference is strong: Had there been any one mercy that God had thought too great, too much for worthless creatures, it would certainly have been this; but since God hath not stuck at giving his Son; this instance of Gods bounty is so high, that it removes all grounds of questioning his bounty in any thing else. The Apostle from this mercy, might very well infer a certain subsequence of all other mercies, that might be profitable or beneficial: no ground of despondency therefore unto such as are interested in Christ.

Gen. 32.10. *Use* 2. What cause have we to be thankful for Christ? We have cause to be thankful for the meanest of mercies, inasmuch as we are *less than the least of all*; much more for this which is the highest of mercies: The mercies of our Creation, preservation, *&c.* though never so many and great, are little in comparison of this. 'Tis mentioned as an astonishing act of love, that God should *so love the world, as to give his only Son*, &c. Joh. 3. 16. [*so*] beyond all comparison [*so*] beyond all expression. If God hath given you his Son, 'tis more than if he had given you a whole world, because it is in him that God hath Ephes 1. 3. *blessed you with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places.*

Use :. How great is their folly and misery, who keep at a distance from Christ? Our Saviour mentions it as the highest folly in the *Jews*, John 5 40. *You will not come unto me, that you might have life.* There is in Christ the life of Justification, to free us from that eternal death to which the Law sentences us: The life of sanctification, to free us from that spiritual death under which our apostacy hath brought us; There is in him an All-sufficient fulness, for the repairing of all our losses: And are these mercies not worthy the coming for? The Apostle puts the very Emphasis of the Heathens misery in this, that they are *without* Ephes. 2 12. *Christ*, and therefore *without hope*: And what is their misery, Shall any of us make our choice?

Use 1. *Of Exhortation.* Let it be your care that Christ may be *All* to you: 'tis no small, nor is it any common priviledge. Many Ephes. 2. 12. there are who live *without Christ*: Others to whom All that is in Christ is so far from being to their salvation, that it only aggravates their

their destruction. He that is to some *the chief corner stone*, is to others no better than a *stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence*. This was prophesied of Christ; This child shall be *for the fall and rising again of many in Israel*. There's no mercy so eminently good, but through our corruptions it may become an occasion of evil. Christ himself, the greatest of mercies that ever God vouchsafed to creatures, is yet so far from saving some from their sins, that he only encreases their sin. *If I had not come and spoke unto them, they had not had sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin.* Those who enjoyed the Ministry of Christ in his own person, and were not wrought upon thereby, all their sins would comparatively have been a kind of innocence, had they not discovered such an height of obstinacy: 'tis therefore no common priviledge. But what should we do that it may be ours? Take these few Directions.

1 Pet. 2. 6, 8. Luk. 2. 34. John 15. 22.

1. Labour to get your judgments setled in the belief of this great truth: That all things in the world are a very nothing without Christ: That you are poor in the midst of worldly riches, and miserable in the midst of all earthly happiness, while you remain in your estrangements from Christ: And that of all kind of poverty and misery this is the worst, because it is in those spiritual blessings wherein consists both our present and future happiness. 'Tis but little those persons understand of their great concernments, that can with that Gospel-fool, think themselves sufficiently provided for in the things of this world, and say to their souls as he to his, *Soul, thou hast goods laid up for many years, eat, drink, and be merry.* Dost thou know thou livest in this world upon the very brink of eternity? And dost thou know whether there be more than *one step between* thee and another world? And canst thou take up with any thing on this side Christ? it is an Argument you know but little of your own concernments. Some of the grosser *Platonists* thought the world to be a great *Animal*, and the soul which acted it was God; now if the soul be departed from the body, what is it but a meer carkass without life. Christ is the very life and soul of all our comforts, and without him all our creature-enjoyments are but as so many cyphers without a figure, which have no significancy in them, but are so many nothings. Nothing in respect of true comfort here; nothing in respect of your preparations for another world. Labour therefore through the glass both of Scripture and experience, to behold all the excellencies of this world, as so many bladders filled with wind, and at best, to be like *Hagars*

Luk. 12. 19.

1 Sam. 20. 3.

Gen. 21. 15. Bottle, which was soon empty, or as *Broken Cisterns*, *Cysterns*, and therefore cannot hold much, *broken Cisterns*, and therefore cannot
Jer. 2. 13. hold what they have long. And withall, let it be your wisdom to look upon Christ, as that everlasting Fountain of all good, which can never be drawn dry, as that never failing Spring of all those blessings which will not only sweeten every condition here, but go with us beyond death and the grave. Such fixed apprehensions of these things will be singularly useful to engage our souls in an earnest pur-
Psal. 63. 8. suit after Christ, or in the Psalmists words, *to follow hard after him*, and 'tis his promise, that they *that come to him, he will in no wise cast out*, John 6. 37.

1 Sam. 5. 4. 2. Be speedy in casting out those inmates, which because they
Amos 3. 3. are unmeet companions for Christ, may hinder his taking possession of your souls. The *Ark* and *Dagon* could not stand together in the same room, but if the *Ark* stands, *Dagon* falls. Can two walk together except they be agreed? Christ and our corruptions are at no agreement, these two cannot dwell together under the same roof. If you would have Christ to take up his abode in your hearts, you must prepare a place for him; It was said of *David*, he would
Psal. 132. 4, 5. neither give *sleep to his eyes, nor slumber to his eye-lids*, till he had found out an habitation for the mighty God of *Jacob*. The souls of most men are so crowded with other guests, that the best entertainment they can afford Christ, is but such as he found in his first entrance into the world, an out-room, a stable, a manger: But let it be your care to renounce communion with all things that might hinder your communion with him, to *forget thy own people, and thy*
Psal. 45. 10, 11. *Fathers house, so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty*; so, not otherwayes, he will have no rivals, no competitors, not a part of our heart, but all.

3. Be willing to accept of Christ upon his own terms, there can
Matth. 16. 24. be no terms hard on which we may gain an interest in him. The great and main condition is self-denial, together with a full resignation of our selves to him; and Self-denial, if duely considered, is the greatest Self-advantage. 1. Because he calls us not to deny our selves in any thing that is truly for our spiritual good, or at least so far as 'tis for our good. 2. Though he calls us to deny our selves in many outward good things, yet 'tis not so much to part with them, as to exchange them for what is better. 3. The main objects of Self-denial are those things which 'tis our priviledge to be freed from; no reason therefore to be offended at such terms as these, to resign up

up our mistaken judgments to the guidance of infinite Wisdom, our corrupt wills, to his most holy and gracious will, to be in all things at the command of him, whose commands are in nothing *grievous*, but in all things *truth* and *righteousness*. Be therefore as willing to be his, as you are desirous he should be yours; the consent must be mutual, or else the match can never be made up 'twixt Christ and your souls. 1 Joh. 5 3. Psal. 119. 151, 172.

4. Measure all things by their reference unto Christ, of all good things account them the best which may promote your endeavours after that good which is the highest; as Ordinances, the means of Grace, which at how high a rate they are valued by *David*, may appear from his pathetical, and most affectionate desires of waiting upon God in them; of all evil things account them the worst which estrange you from Christ the truest good, and therefore let your only impatience be of sin, as that which only *separates between you and your God*. The observation of this rule will very much secure you from all diversions, and quicken you in your endeavours after an interest in Christ. Psal. 27. 4. Psal. 42, 1, 2. Psal. 63. 1, 2. Isa. 59. 2.

2. *Use*. Be serious in resolving this great Question, whether Christ who is All to sincere Christians, be All to you; 'tis a question of that importance, that all your comfort depends upon the resolution of it, yea all your hopes. Take these two Characters.

1. Are you conformable unto Christ? Is the same *mind in you* that *was in him*? Are you holy and humble, and Self-denying, and in all things followers of that pattern which he hath set before you in his own example? *He that is joyned to the Lord, is one spirit*, 1 Cor. 6. 17. *Old things are passed away, behold all things are become new*, 2 Cor. 5 17. Causes are best known by their effects, Trees by their fruits, Fountains by their streams; So is our interest in Christ by this effect thereof, our conformity unto Christ. Rom. 8. 9. Philip. 2. 5.

2. Are you All to him: 'Tis but a just retaliation in Christians to be so, and 'tis withall an evidence that Christ is All to them.

1. Are you All to him in your *affections*, in prizing him above All, can you with the Spouse esteem the love of Christ *better than wine*, with *David*, *better than life*; can you in the midst of all your creature comforts, account all as nothing in comparison of him? and say with *Asaph*, *Whom have I in heaven but God? and there is none on earth I desire in comparison of him*. So high were *Moses* affections, that he esteems *the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt*. And indeed, if Christ be but an underling in our affections, Psal. 63. 3. Psal. 73. 25. Cant. 1. 2. Heb. 11. 26.

'tis

'tis an argument we have no part in him, *He that loveth Father or*
Matth. 10. 37. *Mother more than me, is not worthy of me; he that loveth Son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me.* The affections are the truest pulse of the soul, the most genuine and natural symptomes of its frame and temper. 'Tis these that speak the proper idiom and language of the heart. Make use of this rule therefore; Is Christ uppermost in thy heart, thy affection to him, is an evidence of his to thee.

2. Are you All to him in your *acknowledgments*, in ascribing All to him. Thus St. *Paul*, 1 Cor. 15. 10. *By the grace of God I am what I am.* That my condition is not better, it is from my self, that 'tis so good, 'tis from him. So *Eph.* 5. 20.

3. Are you All to him in your *contentment* and satisfaction, accounting you have All in him, though you have nothing besides him.
Hab. 3. 17, 18. *Although the fig-tree shall not blosson, neither fruits be in the Vine, the labour of the Olive shall fail,* &c. *yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.*

4. Are you all to him in your *dependances* and expectations in seeking All from him, the highest condition of grace, needs further grace, but in Christ are all supplies; 'tis an argument of our interest in him, when in all distresses we make him our refuge, in all weaknesses our strength.

5. Are you All to him in your designs and aims, in seeking his glory, beyond your private advantages; this was St. *Paul's* design in life and death that *Christ* might *be magnified*, Philip. 1. 20. and if you be thus All to Christ, 'tis an evidence Christ is All to you. *And how* well are they provided for, who have him who is All, for their Portion?

How

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How ſhall thoſe Merchants keep up the life of Religion, who, while at home, enjoyed all Goſpel Ordinances, and when abroad, are not only deſtitute of them, but expoſed to perſecution.

Pſal. 120. 5.

Wo is me, that I ſojourn in Meſech; that I dwell in the tents of Kedar.

THis Pſalm is the firſt of thoſe fifteen which are called *Songs of Degrees*, concerning which, the conjectures of Interpreters are various and uncertain; either becauſe they were ſung by the *Jews* at their ſeveral ſtages, in their return from the *Babyloniſh* captivity; or by the Levites: on the fifteen ſteps, or ſtairs, whereby they went up to the houſe of the Lord; or becauſe they raiſed up their voices to an high ſtrain in ſinging them; or becauſe they are Pſalms of greateſt uſe and excellency.

The Pſalm is generally thought to be compoſed upon occaſion of *Davids* flying from *Saul*, and *Doegs* falſe accuſation of him; and it 1 Sam. 22 23. conſiſts of three general parts;

1. *Davids* carriage towards God in the time of his diſtreſs, *verſ.* 1. 2. *In my diſtreſs I cried unto the Lord, and he heard me: Deliver my ſoul*, &c.

2. *Davids*

2. *Davids* denouncing of judgment againſt his ſlanderous falſe-tongued enemy, *verſ* 3. 4. *What ſhall be given?* intimating that he expected ſome great reward for his malice againſt *David*; but ſaith the Pſalmiſt, he ſhall have *ſharp arrows of the Almighty, with coals of juniper*, q. d. whatever reward he have from men, this ſhall be his reward from God.

3. *Davids* bewailing his preſent condition, *v.* 5, 6, 7. The words of the Text are a branch of the third general part of the Pſalm; wherein we have *David* ſadly breathing forth the ſorrow of his heart for his abſence from the Tabernacle and the company of good men, and his dwelling among, & converſe with evil and wicked men, *Wo is me*, &c.

By *ſojourning* I ſuppoſe is implied his abſence from ſome deſired habitation, *viz. Jeruſalem*, and the Tabernacle, for no man is ſaid to ſojourn at home, and when he is where he would be.

Pſal. 39. 12. 105. 23. Heb. 11. 9.

The word *Meſech* is taken by Expoſitors, either 1. For a place, as our tranſlation carries it from the Chaldee paraphraſe, which is the firſt of the ancient verſions that ſo underſtand it: or 2. For an expreſſion of the prolonging of his ſojourning; for ſo the word משך ſignifies *to draw forth* or *to prolong*; and thus the Septuagint renders this place, ὁ παροικία μου ἐμακρύνθη; whom the Arabick, Syriack, and vulgar Latine verſions follow, with ſome others: and the next verſe ſeems to favour this ſenſe, *v.* 6. *My ſoul hath long dwelt*, &c. but either way gives us the ſame ground of complaint, only the firſt ſenſe doubles the ground of the Pſalmiſts trouble, and the other ſuggeſts the circumſtance of the long continuance of his ſojourning.

משך *eſt trahere*, Iſa. 13. 22. יומיה לא ימשכו *dies ejus non trahentur*, i. e. *non prorogabuntur*. Bochart. *Geog. Sacr. par.* 1. *l.* 3. *c.* 12. *p.* 209. Bochart. *ut ſup.*

By *Kedar* is underſtood part of *Arabia*, the inhabitants whereof are called σκηνῖται, or dwellers in tents, becauſe they had no fixed and ſetled habitation, but were robbers and lived upon the prey.

Now we are not to ſuppoſe that *David* did really ſojourn and dwell among theſe barbarous people; but he ſpeaks this of his wandring about from place to place without any ſetled habitation; and to ſet forth the cruelty and inhumanity of thoſe among whom he dwelt, he doth expreſs it thus, *Wo is me that I dwell*, &c. as if one living among profeſſed Chriſtians, who deal with him more like ſavages than Chriſtians, ſhould ſay, Wo is me, that I ſojourn among *Turks* and *Saracens*. And thus you ſee *Davids* preſent condition which he bewails, is his abſence from *Jeruſalem* and the Tabernacle, or place of Gods ſolemn worſhip, and his converſe with wicked and ungodly men: and then theſe two truths lie plain before us in the words,

It

It is oftentimes the lot and portion of good men to be deprived of the society of the godly, and of opportunities of Publick serving God, and to dwell among, and converse with wicked and ungodly persons. Doct. 1.

It is a real ground of trouble and sorrow to a good man to be thus deprived, &c. Doct. 2. 'Twas that which here made *David* proclaim himself in a state of woe and misery; 'twas that which the Apostle tells us did vex the righteous soul of *Lot*, 2 *Pet.* 1, 7. and which made the holy Prophet *Elijah* even weary of his life, 1 *King.* 19. 4. You may easily imagine what a sad heart a poor Lamb might well have, if it be driven from the green pastures, and still waters, and forced to lodge among Wolves and Foxes, where it must feed upon Carrion or starve, and be continually in danger of being lodged in the bellies of its cruel and bloody companions, unless some secret over-ruling hand do restrain their rage, and feed it with wholesome food; and truly such is the condition of those that follow the Lamb of God in holy Lamb-like qualities, when deprived of green pastures, and still waters of Gospel-Ordinances, and forc'd to converse with wicked and ungodly men.

In handling of this Point I shall first lay before you the grounds of it, and then adjoyn such practical application, as may be usefull and profitable.

The grounds of this Truth doe partly refer to God, partly to wicked men, and partly to the godly themselves; if in such a condition a believing soul either look upwards, or outwards, or inwards, he will see much cause of grief and trouble.

1. With reference unto God, and that upon a double account:

1. It is a real ground of sorrow to a believing soul to be deprived of occasions of solemn blessing and praising God; the Soul that is full of the sense of the goodness of God, that knows how many thousand wayes the Lord is continually obliging it to love and bless him, cannot but be afflicted in spirit, to be kept from making its Publick acknowlegements of divine goodness. The Psalmist tells us, *Psal.* 65. 1. *That praise waiteth for God in Sion*, that is, in the Publick Assemblies of the Church; and truly 'tis a grief to a believing Soul, not to wait there with his thank-offerings, not to pay his *vows unto the Lord in the presence of all his people, in the Courts of the Lords house, &c.* not to declare to all that fear God what he hath done for thier Souls. Psal. 116. 17. Psal. 66. 18.

2. It is a real ground of sorrow to live among those that are continually reproaching and blaspheming the Name of God: to see

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ſinners deſpiſe the goodneſs of God, and trample upon *his* grace and mercy, and ſcorn his love and kindneſs, and kick at his bowels, and ſpit in his face, and ſtab at his heart, who is our God, our Father, our Friend, our good and gracious Lord and King: This muſt needs make the believing Soul cry out, Woe is me that I live among ſuch.

Let us ſuppoſe a perſon that hath been hugely obliged by a Prince to love him, and that indeed loves him as his life, *if this* Prince ſhould be driven from his Throne, and an uſurper get into his place, would it not be a great affliction, and ſadning to the ſpirit of ſuch a perſon to live among thoſe who every day revile, reproach, ſcorn and abuſe his gracious Prince? Why Sirs, if you and I be true believers, we know that the Lord is our Sovereign King and Prince, ſuch a one who hath *in*finitely more obliged us to love him, than 'tis poſſible *for any Prince to* oblige a Subject, and we doe love the Lord as our lives, nay better than our lives, or elſe we love him not at all; and muſt it not then be matter of grief, to hear ungodly ſinners, who have driven God away from their hearts and ſouls, where his Throne ſhould be ſet up, and who have let that grand uſurper the Devil ſet up his throne within them, and among them, and who daily ſay unto God as thoſe wicked ones, *Job* 21. 14. *Depart from us, for we deſire not the knowledge of thy wayes*, to hear ſuch curſe and ſwear and blaſpheme God, and in their lives by wicked ungodly courſes do him all the deſpight and diſhonour that they can, bring his Name to the Tavern, to the Stews, upon the ſtage, and there ſoot and defile the great and glorious Name of *God with* the worſt of polutions; Certainly Sirs, he cannot account God his Friend, his Father, his good and gracious Prince, whoſe eye doth not run down with Rivers of tears to ſee men ſo far from keeping Gods Law.

2. It is a trouble to good men to ſojourn, &c. *with reference* to thoſe wicked ungodly perſons among whom they live, it grieves their ſouls to ſee ſinners *run into all exceſs of riot*, eagerly purſuing Hell and Damnation, greedily guzling down full draughts of the venome of Aſps, and the poyſon of Dragons; it pitties them to ſee ſinners ſtab themſelves to the heart, and laughing at their own plague ſores, jeaſting away God and heaven, and eternal happineſs. If any of us ſhould ſee a company of men ſo far beſotted and diſtracted, as that one ſhould rend and burn the Evidences of a great Inheritance which others labour to deprive him of, another ſhould caſt ineſtimable Pearls and Jewels into the Sea, another eagerly drinking

drinking down that which you knew to be the juice of Toads and Spiders, or hugging a Viper, and Scorpion in his bosome, another stabbing himself in the breast, another laughing at, and licking his own plague sores, and all of them reviling, cursing, striking, spitting in the face, and stabbing at the heart of those that any wayes endeavour to hinder them from destroying themselves, or that will not doe as they doe, and be as mad as themselves, should we not pitty them, and with grief of heart say, *Wo is me that I live among such?*

Why Sirs, he that hath had any serious thoughts of Eternity, that hath soberly considered the worth of an immortal soul, that believes the Holiness, Justice, and Power of God, that understands the evill of sin, what a plague, what a Venome, what a dagger at the sinners own heart, sin is, he cannot but see and know that every ungodly prophane sinner is much more an object of highest compassion than any I have now mentioned, and therefore cannot but cry out, *Wo is me*, &c.

3. It is a trouble to good men to sojourn, &c. with reference to themselves, and their own concernments, because they are sensible that such a condition layes them open to a great deal of danger; and that

1. In regard of their graces; for the want of the Society of good men, and the Ordinances of the Gospel, is like the want of dew and Rain to the Grass, or Food to the Body; and therefore those who have tasted of *the sweetness and fatness*, and know what a blessedness 'tis to be *satisfied with the goodness* of Gods house, cannot but mourn over the want of Gospel-Ordinances; as the presence of the Sun beams make the flowers to be fresh and beautifull, and yield a fragrant smell; whereas the want thereof makes them look pale and wan, and hang the head; even so the enjoyment of good Society and Gospel-Ordinances, makes the Graces of a Believer amiable and lovely, and give forth their pleasant smell, the want of which makes them very much to droop and languish. Psal. 36. 8. 63. 4.

And then on the other side, the Society of wicked men, the venome and poyson of an evill example, the alluring flatteries of the world on one hand, and its frowns and threatnings on the other hand, are of great force to nip and blast, to dead and dull the graces of good men.

And therefore he who knows the worth and value of true Grace, that accounts it his Riches, his Treasure, his Jewel, his Life, and is sensible how much depends upon the life and vigour of Grace and Luke 12. 20.

Religion in his Soul, and understands how destructive the want of Gospel-Ordinances, and the company of evil men are to his Graces, may, well cry out, *Wo is me that I sojourn*, &c.

2. In regard of their persons, and the concernments of this life; the enmity that is in the seed of the Serpent, against the seed of the Woman, doth not onely put forth it self in endeavours to ruine or weaken their graces, but also to destroy their persons: wicked mens malice against that spiritual life of grace in good men, which themselves do not partake of, doth soon improve into malice also against that natural humane life which themselves are also partakers of; their desires to suck the blood, as I may so say, of good mens souls and graces, makes them delight to suck the blood of their bodies; witness *Cain*, the first that learnt this bloody trade, by killing his brother for no other cause, but *because his own works were evil, and his brothers righteous*; witness also *Ahab* and *Jezabel*, *Manasseh*, &c. but the foul-mouthed witness to this black and sad truth, is the scarlet bloody Whore of *Babylon*, who is *drunken with the blood of the Saints, and with the blood of the Martyrs of Jesus*, and therefore in Gods due time she shall have *blood to drink*; those therefore who understand what an hellish fire of rage is in the hearts of wicked men, how great their malice is against goodness and good men, and what combustible matter our life, and the comforts of this life be, so far as they value these mercies, have reason with *David* to cry out, *Wo is me that I sojourn in Mesech*, &c.

1 Joh. 3. 12.

Rev. 17. 6.

And now the wofull condition of those that are deprived of Gospel Ordinances, and sojourn where heavenly Manna doth not fall, and who dwell among, and converse with wicked and ungodly men, as it calls upon us to bless God when it is not so with us, and to pity and pray for those who have reason to take up such a complaint, as *David* here doth; so also to bethink our selves what we ought to do *if the* case were ours; for you know the life of a Christian is very oft, and very fitly in Scripture compared to a warfare; and surely he is but a mean souldier, and never like to come off with victory and triumph, who doth not prepare himself for all kinde of assaults, and doth not labour to fortifie every passage, whereat he may be stormed; and therefore 'tis good for us to make the condition of others our own; so that this question, or practicall case of conscience will offer it self to our consideration.

Quest, How shall those Merchants and others keep up the life of Religion, who while they were at home, enjoyed all Gospel-Ordinances,

nances, but being abroad, are not onely deprived of them, but liable to the Inquisition, and other wayes of persecution for their Religion?

Before I answer the Case I shall a little open it, and lay down some preparatory propositions for the right understanding of it, and then direct our practise.

By Religion we doe not understand any outward way or form, any pomp and gayeties in worshipping God; but such a due sence of our dependance upon a good and gracious, Almighty, Holy God, for our being, and well-being, both in Time and to Eternity, as doth powerfully engage the soul heartily to love God, and sincerely to serve him, in obeying his good and holy commands made known to us.

By the life of Religion we may understand, either 1. The truth and reality of it in the soul, in opposition to a soul dead in sin; or 2. The vigour, activity and livelinesse of Religion, in opposition to a dead, dull languid principle; and both may be well included in the Question, for as we are all concerned to endeavour, by all fit and lawfull means, not only to have our bodies kept from rotting and putrifying by the *salt* of *a living soul*, but to have them active and vigorous, fit for the employments of a naturall life, and not stupified with Lethargies and benumming Palsies; even so we ought to endeavour, not only that our Souls may be quickned with a true principle of Religion, but that we may have such a lively, vigorous and influencing sence of divine goodnes upon them, that our Religion may not be a dull, languid, lethargick principle, but may render us fit and prompt for all the actions of a spirituall life. And now, this life of Religion, the case supposeth the person to have, who needs advice; and then you'l quickly perceive that there be two things in danger.

Salillum animæ. Plant.

1. The life of Religion in a Religious person.

2. The life of a Religious person; and so the Case doth resolve it self into these two Queries,

1. What should believing Christians doe to support the life and vigour of Religion in their Souls, when they want the ordinary means of Publick Ordinances, and are indangered by the leavening society of wicked men?

2. How should they preserve their lives among persecuting enemies without hazzarding the life of their Religion?

For the clearing of and directing in this case I shall now premise some Propositions fit to be taken notice of,

It

Prop. 1. It cannot be expected, that any Rule ſhould be given, according to Scripture, whereby both the one, and the other life may be certainly ſecured; for many times Gods providence brings us into ſuch circumſtances, that if we are reſolved, that come what will, wee'l keep our Religion, we muſt loſe our lives: and if we are reſolved to keep our lives, though with the hazard, or ſhipwrack of our Religion, we muſt then part with our Religion, and perhaps our lives too.

2. There can be no certain and infallible courſe propounded whereby the life of the body may be ſecured with the loſs of Religion; though Devil and world bid fair, and promiſe we ſhall live and doe well if we will part with our Religion, yet they are not able, if willing to make good their promiſe, ſo long as there be ſo many thouſand wayes to death beſides Martyrdome; and this is the purport of that threatning expreſſion, *Matth.* 16. 25. *Whoſoever will ſave his life ſhall loſe it*, not only that eternall life which is the only true life, but even this temporall life; as many relations tell us.

3. The life of Religion in the ſoul, is that which by Gods bleſſing and our ſpirituall care and induſtry may be infallibly ſecured in any place, among any perſons, in any condition; I do not ſay the outward exerciſe of Religion, but that which is the life and principle of Religion in the ſoul may be preſerved. Force and violence may deprive thoſe that are Religious, of opportunities to meet together, and pour forth their *Common prayers* and ſupplications to God, and publickly ſing forth the praiſes of God, and hear the great Truths of the Goſpell preached unto them; nay they may be hindred from ſpeaking with their mouthes, either to God, or for God; as many of the Martyrs have been gagged: but all the force and violence in the world, cannot take away that which is the principle and life of Religion (unleſs we our ſelves betray and caſt it from us) nor can they hinder the prime, and principall acts and exerciſes of Religion. All the world cannot hinder you or me, from having good thoughts of God, from ſanctifying the Lord God in our hearts, from truſting in, hoping in, rejoycing in, the goodneſs and mercy of God through Jeſus Chriſt; from making holy melody in our hearts, and ſuch muſick as ſhall be heard beyond the ſphears, though he that ſtands at our elbow knows not a word we ſpeak; ſo that true Religion both in the principle and prime exerciſes of it may be infallibly ſecured, inſomuch that he who can rend the heart out of the Body, cannot tear Religion out of the Soul.

4. His

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4. His Soul cannot be quickned with life of the Religion of the Goſpell, who is not in heart perſwaded, that the ſecuring the life of Religion in his Soul, is hugely more his concernment, than the preſerving the life of the body. Yea his Religion is built on a Sandy foundation, who hath not ſeriouſly conſidered, that for ought he knows, his Religion may coſt him his life, and hath not brought his ſoul to an humble reſolution to lay down his life, rather than let goe his Religion: thus much is clearly imported in that paſſage, *Luk.*14.27,28, &c. *Which of you intending to build a tower, ſitteth not down firſt and counteth the coſt*, &c.

5. The Society of good men, and enjoyment of Goſpell Ordinances, is of ſpeciall uſe to preſerve, quicken and enliven the principle of Religion in the Soul; they are to Religion in the Soul, what Food is to the naturall life of the Body: and therefore the Ordinances in the Church, are compared to *breaſts of Conſolation*, *Iſa.* 66.11. The great deſign of God in appointing Goſpell Ordinances is, that by the help and aſſiſtance of thoſe Gifts and Graces which he beſtows upon his Miniſters, the Souls of thoſe who are eſtranged from him, ſhould be brought home to the owning and acknowledging of the truth; and that thoſe who have returned to the Lord, ſhould be more and more affected with a ſenſe of Divine Goodneſs, and their dependance on the Lord, for all they have and hope for; and indeed if Preaching and Reading, and Praying, and every other Ordinance, both in Publick and in Private, doe not aim at and intend this great end, the begetting or actuating and ſtirring up the life of Religion in our Souls, then are they what ſome would fain perſwade us, vain, uſeleſs, troubleſome things. If thy coming to Church to hear a Prayer, or a Sermon, be not by thee deſigned, and doe not in the event tend to make thee better, to love God more, loath ſin more, and value the world leſs, and reſolve more heartily to obey the Goſpell, thou hadſt as good have been in thy bed or ſhop as in the Church; and if in Preaching and Praying, we that are Gods mouth to you, and your mouth to God, have any other deſign than to ſtir up in your Souls good thoughts of God, affectionate workings of heart towards a loving tender-hearted Father, zealous and hungring deſires, to doe the will of God, and expreſs our love by obeying his Commandments, I ſeriouſly profeſs I ſhould think my ſelf much better imployed to be working in a Coblers ſtall, or raking in the kennel, or filling a dung cart, than preaching or praying in a pulpit; and let thoſe who doe not intend theſe great ends, know that ere long they

they will finde, they had better have been imployed in the moſt debaſing drudgery, than in the outward work of God with ſiniſter and unworthy ends,

Theſe things premiſed, the caſe reſolves it ſelf into theſe particular queſtions,

1. What ſhould believing Chriſtians doe to ſupport the life of Religion in their ſouls, when they want the ordinary food of publick Goſpel-Ordinances?

2, What ſhould ſuch doe to preſerve their outward concernments among perſecuting enemies without hazarding their Religion?

In anſwer to the firſt queſtion take theſe Directions:

1. Let ſuch humbly reflect upon their former ſleighting, deſpiſing and abuſing the means of grace which now they want; it is the uſuall method of God, to teach us the worth of Mercies either Temporal or Spiritual by the want of them, and to bring us to want thoſe mercies which we abuſe; if the Childe play with, or throw about his meat, he may well think a wiſe and loving Father will make him feell the want of it, and thereby know the worth of it; and certainly we have as much reaſon to fear the fulfilling of thoſe threatnings which the Miniſters of the Goſpel have for many years ſounded in our ears, for our abuſe of the means of grace; and certainly if Gods providence ſhould call the moſt of us into *Spain*, or ſome other Popiſh Country where we ſhould have *a famine of hearing the word of the Lord*, might we not ſadly reflect upon our deſpiſing, yea and loathing the heavenly Manna of Gods Word? *I ſpeak* not of the prophane ungodly wretches, who ſcarce ever had any ſerious thoughts of Eternity, nor ever ſoberly conſidered whether they were at all beholding unto God or no, that never knew how to value a Bible above a Play-book, or the Sacrament above a drunken meeting, whoſe Religion is to ſcoffe and mock at godlineſs and godly men, and who ſcarce ever knew any other end in coming to Church, but to mock or carp at the Preacher, who may with trembling read their doom, 2 *Chron.* 36. 16. But I ſpeak of the Profeſſors of Religion, how have they either by reaſon of new fangled opinions, ſleighted and deſpiſed Goſpel-Ordinances? or elſe by reaſon of fulneſs of ſpiritual food, have loathed and trampled upon the means of grace, to whom the Lord ſeems to ſpeak, as to thoſe, *Ezek.* 34. 18. 19. *Seemeth it a ſmall thing unto you to have eaten up the good paſture but you muſt tread down with your feet the reſidue of your paſtures? and to have drunk of the deep waters, but ye muſt foul the reſidue with*

your

your feet? And as for my flock they eat that which ye have trodden with your feet; and they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet; or else having enjoyed them, and made use of them, have been little the better by them? have not lived and practised the Sermons they have heard, and the prayers they have made? Oh let such be sure in the first place to give glory to God, when he deprives them of such means, by acknowledging his justice in taking away what hath been so much abused, or at best so little improved; then let them with broken and bleeding hearts reflect upon those full Banquets of spiritual dainties, the fragments of which in a time of want they would be glad of.

2. Heartily resolve, if ever the Lord bring you again to enjoy Gospel-Ordinances, you will more value, prize, and improve them; and indeed that alone which can make our repentings and sad reflections upon former miscarriages not to be mockings of God, and cousening our selves, must be an hearty resolution against what we profess to be sorry for; and therefore that our resolution in such a case may be the more fixed, it would be good to record it in our Note-books, that so it may be a continual Monitor on all occasions minding us of our duty, and checking us, if afterwards we prove like the *Israelites*, who *soon forgat the Lord*. And the truth is a Christi- Psal. 106. 13.
ans Note-book is usually a more faithfull register than his heart, and 'tis easier for the Divel to blot a good resolution out of our mindes, that out of our books.

3. Labour to know and understand well, and often remember, wherein consists the life of true and real Religion; there be so many things in the world that pretend to be Religion, and less deserve that name, than the picture of a man deserves the name of a man, that 'tis an easie mistake, to nourish an enemy to Religion instead of Religion, unless we be serious and wary, and more apt to regard the characters which the Scriptures give, of real Religion, than hasty to take up the forms and fancies of men instead of Religion. I have read of a young *French* Lady, who observing the glorious pomp and splendour of a Popish Profession, cryed out, How fine a Religion is ours in comparison of the *Hugonots?* a speech suiting her age and quality; but indeed if Religion did consist in such things, the question I have in hand would fall to the ground, for there could then be no exercise of Religion among those who would not admit of such pompous solemnities. Let us therefore be often remembring, that the Religion of the Gospel consists in

Rom. 14. 17. *righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy Ghost*; in *denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and living soberly, righteously, and godly in*
Tit. 2. 12. 13. *this present world, and so looking for that blessed hope and the glorious*
Jam. 1 27. *appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ*; in *visiting the fatherless and widowes in their affliction, and keeping our selves unspotted from the world.* He that hath a precious Jewell which he would secure, must be able to distinguish it well from a counterfeit stone; lest he neglect his Jewell and spend his care and pains upon a glittering glass foysted into the room of it.

4. In all your actions be often fixing your eye upon your great end; be often asking your selves what is the work and business for which God sent me into the world? which lyes in three words: 1. Honour God. 2. Save your Souls. 3. Do good to others. Be often minding your selves that you have a better Trade to drive than for the corruptible riches of this world, even for the *pearl of great price*, the eternall happiness of your souls. Religion is the way to Heaven, and he that doth not often eye his journeys end, and consider, whether the way he takes, do lead unto his end, is never like to keep long in the right way; but now he that often with seriousness considers with himself that the God who made him, expects to be honoured by him; that the securing his souls welfare is his grand concernment; and that to save the soul of one sinner is a greater good than to save a Countrey from drowning, or a City from burning; and therefore on all occasions asks himself, how may I mannage such a business so as to honour God and promote the good of mine own and other mens souls? How may I prosecute such an affair without prejudicing the grand design of my life? This man is like to secure Religion in his soul.

5. Live up to the professed principles of your Religion; and believe it to be a greater glory to God, honour to your Religion, and security to your own souls to live according to, than to argue and dispute for your Religion; for most certain it is that self-love, worldly intereſt, pride, passion, *&c.* May urge men to argue eagerly for the Christian or Protestant Religion, whereas nothing but love to God, and care of our own souls, and charity to the souls of others, can make a man live according to the Principles of that Religion; and as it is with the principle of naturall life, it is not made more lively, active and vigorous by arguing and disputing wherein it doth consist, and what are the proper acts of it, but by putting it forth in the due acts and exercises of that life; even so the principle of

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of ſpirituall life in the ſoul, gets no ſtrength by zealous and hot di-ſputing, what and which is the true Religion, and which be true and proper acts of Religion, but by humble practice of what we know to be Religion; not but that it is both lawfull and commendable to be able to underſtand and defend the grounds and principles of our Religion, and all the holy exerciſes of it, but I only caution againſt letting that ſap run out in unfruitfull ſuckers, which ſhould nouriſh the fruit-bearing branches.

6. Be the more carefull to obſerve and cloſe with the inward ſtirrings of Gods Spirit in your hearts, moving you to prayer, meditation, *&c.* When you are in *a valley of viſion*, you will have many calls and motions from without to hear the Word, and pray, and receive the Sacrament, but when you are abroad in a land of darkneſs, God muſt not onely be your *beſt*, but your *only* freind, by his Spirit to jog and ſtir you up to holy duties; and therefore it doth more than ordinarily concern us, at ſuch a time, not to ſend away Gods Spirit grieved with our backwardneſs to that which is our own concernment.

7. Obſerve and keep a regiſter or diary of Gods mercies and your own ſins; that you may be often minded what God hath been to you, and what you have been to him; with how many thouſand kindneſſes he hath obliged you, and with how many thouſand ſins you have diſobliged him; When we enjoy publick Ordinances we may there be often minded both of Gods goodneſs to us and our ſinfulneſs againſt him; and ſo may have our hearts ſtirred up to have very good thoughts of God, and very low thoughts of our ſelves: but when we want publick Ordinances we ſhould labour to ſupply that want, by a more ſtrict obſervation and recording, both the one and the other; that by reviewing our regiſter we may be enabled to affect our ſouls ſutably, either to praiſe the Lord, or abaſe our ſelves.

8. Lay a charge upon your ſelves to ſleep and awake with the thoughts of God, and eternity upon your ſouls; and indeed though this is exceeding uſefull for all men, yet moſt of all for thoſe who are deprived of Ordinances. Tis ſure that the ſame truths which at firſt work upon the ſoul to the begetting grace, are of force afterwards to quicken grace, and make it lively and vigorous in the ſoul; and certainly the belief of what God is in himſelf and to us, and the thoughts of eternity, have a great force to perſwade careleſs ſinners to ſober and ſerious conſideration, the neceſſary inſtrument

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by which grace and a ſpirit of true and reall Religion is begot in the ſoul; and therefore when we want thoſe publick Ordinances which might be often preſenting theſe great truths to our ſouls, it will be of great uſe to charge our ſelves more ſeverely with the daily ſerious thoughts of them.

9. Take heed (as for your life) of indulging any ſecret ſin; for that will keep down the life of Religion in the midſt of all Ordinances, and therefore much more in the want of them; a ſecret diſeaſe in the body which ſpends upon the ſtock of the radicall moyſture, will keep a man from being lively and vigorous, though he have plenty of very good nouriſhing food, much more will it endanger one in a famine; even ſo a ſecret ſin lodged within, and indulged, will weaken and enervate the principle of Religion in the ſoul amidſt the fulleſt proviſion of Goſpel-Ordinances, much more when there is a famine or ſcarity of the bread of life. A Tradeſman that hath ſome ſecret vent, where his eſtate runs waſt, may prove a beggar in the midſt of daily incomes by a good Trade, much more if he ſpends upon a dead ſtock; and ſo a man who ſpends the ſtrength of his ſoul in ſome cloſe and ſecret ſin, may prove a ſpirituall beggar in the fulleſt Trade of Goſpel-Ordinances, and though he have daily incomes of convictions, informations, reproofs, counſels, ſollicitations, &c. from publick Ordinances, much more in the want of them; and therefore they who value the life of Religion, or the life of their ſouls, muſt take heed of indulging ſecret ſins.

10. Be the more carefull often to feel the pulſe of thine own ſoul; we uſe to ſay, every man at a competent age is either a fool or a Phyſician, and though he be a fool indeed, who when he needs and may have wiſer Phyſicians will truſt to himſelf, yet when he cannot have others, a man ſhould the more ſtudy himſelf, and the oftener try his own pulſe; and truly he is but a babe in ſpiritual things that is not ſomething of a Phyſician to himſelf; and though we ſhould not truſt our own skill or experience, where we need and may have the help of others, yet when we are deprived of them, we ſhould the more diligently converſe with our own ſouls, and be the oftner trying how our pulſe beats towards God, and Heaven, and the things of another life.

11. Be ſo much the more in private ſecret prayer, reading, and meditation; when we want the ſhowrs of publick Ordinances, we ſhould the more diligently uſe the watring pot, and water our ſouls

with

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with our foot (as the phraſe is concerning *Ægypt*) Deut. 11. 10. If our lot ſhould be caſt where there be no publick Markets where Corn might be bought, every one would plow and ſow, reap and thraſh in his own grounds: Even ſo, if we ſhould live where there be no publick Goſpel-Ordinances, where the Truths of the Goſpel are not publickly to be had, where we cannot partake of the labours of the Goſpel-Miniſtery, then it would concern us to be the more diligent in plowing, and ſowing, in reaping and thraſhing by our own private endeavours; and I think it would be fit for us in ſuch a condition, to ſpend that time at leaſt in private duties, which others ſpend in ſuperſtitious or Idolatrous ſervices; let not us think much to give God and our ſouls that time, which others give to their own ſuperſtitious fancies.

12. In the uſe of all private helps, act faith in God, as being able to ſupply the want of outward means by the gracious influence of his good and holy Spirit. When there was no rain from heaven, God could cauſe a miſt to ariſe and water the earth, *Gen.* 2. 6. even ſo if the Lord ſhould bring us where there be no ſhowres of publick Ordinances, he can ſtir up in our ſouls thoſe holy and heavenly meditations, which ſhall again drop down like an heavenly dew upon the face of our ſouls, and keep up an holy verdure and freſhneſs upon the face of our ſouls. *Ægypt* is ſaid to have no rain, but God makes it fruitfull by the overflowing of its own River *Nilus*; and truly if God bring any true believer into a ſpiritual *Ægypt*, where the rain of publick Ordinances doth not fall, he can cauſe ſuch a flow of holy and heavenly thoughts and meditations as ſhall make the ſoul very fruitfull in a good and an holy life; and therefore we ſhould oft in ſuch a condition believingly remember, that if we do our endeavour, by private prayer, meditation, reading, and ſuch like, God is able and will, in the want of publick Ordinances, preſerve the life of Religion in our ſouls, by private helps. Terra non indiga Jovis.

We proceed now to the ſecond Queſtion contained in the general caſe, *viz.*

Queſt. What ſhould believing Chriſtians do to preſerve their outward concernments among perſecuting enemies, without hazarding their Religion.

Now this queſtion will reſolve it ſelf into two particular Queries.

1. What ſhould ſuch do to ſecure themſelves from ſuffering?

2. What ſhould they do to encourage themſelves againſt and ſupport

ſupport in ſufferings. The ſumme of what may be ſaid to the firſt Query, I ſuppoſe to be comprized in that counſel of our Lord Jeſus, who was Wiſdom it ſelf, and Innocency it ſelf, *Matth.* 10. 16. *Behold I ſend you forth as ſheep in the midſt of Wolves, be ye therefore wiſe as Serpents, and harmleſs as Doves*; the Serpents wiſdom joyned with the Doves innocency are the true Chriſtians beſt ſecurity; to each of which I ſhall ſpeak ſomething.

1. Get ſpiritual Prudence and Wiſdom to ſecure from ſuffering where we have not a clear and ſufficient call. The Heathens hinted wiſdom as well as ſtrength to be needfull for a Souldier, when they appointed the Warlike Goddeſs *Pallas* to be the Patroneſs of Wiſdom; a Souldier may and ought to guard himſelf, and by winding and turning his body avoid the enemies blow, ſo long as he doth not turn his back, forſake the field, or betray his truſt; in like manner may a good Souldier of Jeſus Chriſt, by any *lawfull means* guard himſelf from ſuffering; and by any juſt compliance, or ſtepping aſide, or giving back, avoid a blow or make a fair retreat, ſo long as he keeps the Field, and doth not turn his back upon, nor give up a good, and a juſt cauſe for fear of ſuffering. Hence the Apoſtle adviſeth, *Col.* 4. 5. *Walk in wiſdom toward them that are without*, that is, walk as thoſe that have wiſely fixt upon a good end, and do uſe the moſt proper and likely means to attain that end. Now this general direction will branch it ſelf forth into theſe particulars:

1. Do not raſhly and unneceſſarily provoke thoſe that have power to do you a miſchief; it is not wiſdom to ſtir in a waſps *neſt*, nor by bloody colours to provoke a wilde Bull; and certainly our life; and the comforts and relations in this world, are ſuch real and great bleſſings, that they are not to be ſacrificed to an humour, nor caſt away, but upon the moſt ſerious conſideration, and real neceſſity; and certainly when our Lord Jeſus directed his Diſciples, if perſecuted in one *City*, to flie to another, he never intended they ſhould throw themſelves into the jaws of roaring Lions, nor provoke Bears and Tygers to tear them in pieces, nor leave the quiet habitation of *Sion* to ſeek perſecution, and court a Martyrdom among Pagans and infidels. The holy Apoſtle *Paul*, who was
Act. 21. 13. as willing to die for the Name of Chriſt as any, and was therefore by his love and zeal urged to go into the Theater at *Epheſus*, yet he took the Prudent counſel and advice of his Friends, not to venture himſelf, nor by his preſence provoke the enraged multitude, *Acts* 19. 31.

19. 31. and afterward he made use of his Kinsmans help to secure his life from those who had bound themselves with an oath to kill him, *Act.* 23. 16. and at last appeals to *Cæsar* to avoid the mischief designed against him by the *Jews*, *Act.* 25. 10. This piece of spiritual prudence caused the primitive Christians to abstain from prophaning the Temples of the heathen, and reviling their gods; and therefore they chose to discover to them the vanity of their Idolatries from the Writings and Records of their own Prophets, and with the greatest love and sweetness that could be; yea this was so evident in *Paul* himself, that the Town-clark of *Ephesus* was able to be his, and his fellow-Christian Compurgator in this matter, *Act.* 19.37. *Ye have brought hither these men which are neither robbers of Churches* (or as the original, ἱεροσύλους *sacrilegious persons*) *nor yet blasphemers of your goddess*, and therefore that which *Josephus* accounts one of *Moses* Laws, *that none should blaspheme the Religion of another*, though it be not a general duty (as appears by *Elijahs* mocking and scoffing at the God and religion of *Baals* Priests, 1 *King.* 18. 27) yet it holds good here as a rule of prudence, to avoid needless provoking of those that are without. And in this case I take this to be a sure rule, whatever act of ours hath rationally a greater likelihood to provoke, harden and enrage the hearts of men, rather than to convince and convert, is a fruit of indiscretion, not of Christian prudence; a piece of folly, not a part of our duty. It was certainly a favour from God when he inclined the heart of *Trajane* to order his Proconsul *Plinius Secundus*, desiring to know his pleasure in the case, that when any were brought before him, and accused to be Christians, he should punish them according to Law, but should not industriously search them out; if now any should have rushed into the Judges presence, and taken the Devils work out of his hand (who is the accuser of the Brethren) it would surely have been a sinfull undervaluing the favour of God in that relaxation of their persecution. But now this advice must be bounded with a word of caution, for as we should take heed least our zeal degenerate into ambition, and foolish vain-glory in suffering: so on the other side, least our prudence and Christian wisdom turn to sinful craft and policy, while to avoid the stroak of persecution, we take up the Devils buckler of unlawfull practises. The Apostle *Peter* was not bound to go into the high Priests hall, and proclaim himself a Disciple of Jesus, but he was obliged not to deny and forswear it when challenged with it; and so though I am not alway bound to proclaim

Plin. See Ep. l. 10. conquirendi non sunt, si de secantur & arguantur, puniendi sunt.

claim my faith and Religion, yet am I engaged never to diſown it, and therefore we muſt take heed of that which *Elihu* charged *Job* with, *Job*, 36, 21. the chooſing *iniquity rather then affliction*; and therefore when fear or covetouſneſs would urge us to ſin, rather than ſuffer, let us remember, againſt our fears, that 'tis a more fearfull thing to fall into the hands of the living God, than dying men, *Iſa.* 51. 12. and againſt our earthly deſires, let us remember, that if we gain the whole world, and loſe our own ſouls, we ſhall be incomparable loſers by the bargain, *Matth.* 16. 26. On the other ſide, when ambition, vain-glory or humour would urge us to unneceſſary ſufferings, let us remember, that God who is Wiſdom it ſelf, *hath no pleaſure in fools*, Eccl. 5. 4. nor delights in thoſe ſacrifices which are not preſented to him by prudent conſideration and ſober reſolution, but by the folly of a *precipitate zeal*; and however where the heart is right and full of love, God may accept of the love, and pardon the weakneſs, yet he no way delights in the ſufferings which men bring upon themſelves unneceſſarily, by raſh, imprudent carriage, whereby they betray their lives and liberties to the luſts and rage of men, and draw on their enemies to blood and cruelty, and upbraid the wiſdome of thoſe who are not ſo raſh, as being leſs real to God and Chriſt, and make others have hard thoughts of that Religion which cannot conſiſt with prudence and wiſdome.

2. Be much in the exerciſe of thoſe acts of true Religion which are beautiful in the eyes of all, even the worſt of men; the *Apoſtle Peter* intimates the ſecurity of an evidently good and holy life, 1 *Pet.* 3. 13. *And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?* the chief pieces of Chriſtian Religion are ſuch as Papiſts, Turks and Infidels muſt needs acknowledge to be good; *To viſit the fatherleſs and widows in their affliction*; *To wrong no man*; *To do to others whatever we would that others ſhould do to us*: Now when we cannot without danger exerciſe ſome other (perhaps more queſtionable) parts of Chriſtian Religion, then 'tis good to be ſo much the more in the practice of theſe undoubted pieces of a Chriſtian life, and zeal in theſe things will force thoſe without to approve, whereas zeal in arguing for, or in practiſing other things may cauſe them to hate and perſecute us; zeal in arguing and diſputing brings on evil words and evil actions, but zeal in the practice of unqueſtionable duties, produceth good deeds in our ſelves, and forceth goods thoughts and good words, if not good deeds from others.

In

In a word, hot disputing, and cold living, or zeal in smaller, and lukewarmness in greater matters, is the ruine of grace in our selves, the confirming of sin in others, and the needless hazarding our outward concernments and betraying them rashly to the violence of wicked and ungodly men.

3. In your converse with those who are without, chuse mostly to insist upon common, and acknowledged principles, rather than controverted points; if I were to live among, and converse with Papists, I would chuse much rather to urge them to abstain from lying, drunkenness, malice, *&c.* and to have good thoughts of God, to have a continual sense of their dependance upon him, and therefore continually to recommend themselves unto him by holy prayer, to be meek and patient, and charitable, rather then to dispute how many Sacraments there be, or how the bread and the wine is the body and blood of Christ; for good counsel, and sober exhortations speak love to mens souls, whereas disputes and arguings are usually thought to proceed only from love to our own notions, and a desire to oppose others; and indeed if men did not place too much of their Religion in opposing others; they might much more safely, and much more profitably converse with those of different opinions, yea of different Religions.

4. When you do touch upon controverted points, rather enquire and propound, than positively assert, and violently oppose; though I judge the Mass of *Rome*, as by them used, to be a piece of as gross Idolatry, as the world can shew, yet were I to converse among Papists I would not fall foul upon them as the grossest Idolaters; but as more desiring truth should be honoured, than they reproached, I would calmly and meekly propound my reasons as grounds of doubting, rather than clear demonstrations; for sure it is, that a sudden and violent assault, will cause an adversary to gather up his strength, as violently to oppose, whereas a calm propounding of reasons, or doubts may work him to a serious consideration, which is the first step to the discovery of error and acknowledging of truth; for the one kindles a desire of knowing, the other, a desire of opposing, yea of persecuting.

5. When you think your selves bound to reprove the sins of others, let it be done with a due consideration of the circumstances of time, place and persons; and indeed there's scarce any part of a Christians converse with others, that more requires prudence and wisdom, than that of reproving others; and great care is to be had

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that a reproof may at the leaſt be well taken, if not hearkened to, and that it may do the reprover no hurt, if it do the reproved no good.

6. On all occaſions expreſs a willingneſs to do for the beſt; to believe as others believe, and to do as others do, if you could ſee ſufficient ground and reaſon for it: and indeed this may be a great help and ſecurity; for obſtinacy is uſually made one eſſentiall part of an Heretick, and then, he that is heartily willing to cloſe with every revealed truth, may be in an errour, but cannot be an Heretick; and therefore every expreſſion of a mind not obſtinately bent upon its taken up notions, nor doting upon its own conceptions, but inricht with an ingenuous freedom to acknowledge its miſtakes, and own truth when once clearly diſcovered, though formerly diſowned, is like ſo much water upon the fire of rage kindled in the hearts of perſecuting enemies to quench or abate it; for to the reaſon of any *that will but* conſider, it cannot but appear moſt unreaſonable, to urge a perſon to believe what he cannot ſee any ground for, or to do what he would be willing to do, if it were not ſin, that is, a provoking God, and hazarding his own eternal welfare.

7. Be ſure to uſe no means to ſecure from perſecution or procure the enjoyment of publick Ordinances, but ſuch as are well-pleaſing to a good, and a holy God; 'tis not long ſince it was the peculiar honour of the Popiſh Faction, to depoſe or murder Kings, blow up Parliaments, ſubvert States and Kingdoms, to procure their liberty, or ſecure themſelves from ſuffering: and if any other have ventured upon ſuch practices, I hope God hath taught them by his providence, what they would not learn from his word, that affliction is rather to be choſen than ſin, and that 'tis better to wait upon him in the way of his Judgments (that is, in a way of duty) than to *out-run* God, and think to ſecure our ſelves by ſinfull and *unjuſtifiable* courſes. Let thoſe therefore who profeſs to believe *that* their God is a God hearing prayer, and that bottles up the tears of his people, and is able to do what he pleaſeth, let them account prayers and tears their beſt arms, ſeeing they call in that God whoſe power extends as far as his will.

8. Arm your ſelves with a ſevere patience and a ſteady reſolution to bear leſſer affronts and injuries; thoſe Chriſtians were in ſuch a condition as we are now ſpeaking of, whom the Apoſtle mindes, that they had *need of patience*, *Heb.* 10. 36. Let it be our wiſdom therefore to get a ſtock of that which will be ſo needfull for us, patience

tience is alway apart of our duty, but in this case it is also an instance of our prudence; for he is a fool that will hazard the beating out of his brains, rather than bear a fillip.

9. Be much in prayer to that God who alone can secure from suffering, fit for suffering, strengthen under, and infinitely reward after we have suffered.

2. Let the Serpents wisdome be seconded with the Doves harmlesness and innocency; walk so honestly, and inoffensively that wicked men may be put hard to it, to finde an occasion to quarrel or wrong you; this was remarkable in *Daniel*, as you may see *Chap.* 6.4. this was the Apostles direction, 1 *Thess.* 4. 12. *Walk honestly toward those that are without*; and it was according to his practice, *Act.* 24. 16. *And herein do I exercise my self, to have alwayes a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.* Now this Christian innocency or simplicity ought to be like a thred to run through the whole course of our converse with others; we should neither injure the person, good name, estate, friend; or any thing which an other may call his; if the Lamb among Wolves and Foxes begin to butt, and contend no wonder if these soon bite and devour; we should be so honest and plain hearted in our Promises, Contracts, Covenants, and dealings with others, that they may reverence our Religion as teaching us to do the best things, and suffer the worst, and not hate our Religion, as being onely a design to make us the better able to deceive and injure others. 'Twould be no small part of our security if our carriage towards others might speak for us that which the Poet makes *Achilles* speak concerning himself, and his Tutor *Chiron*, *Jesus Christ is my Teacher, and he hath learnt me to use simplicity and honesty in all my manners.* But now if neither of these two will secure us from suffering, but Gods providence doth call us to a publick owning of him, and the Religion of the Gospel, we must then joyn the Lions courage to the wisdom of the Serpent, and the innocency of the Dove, that we may be imboldned to look the greatest danger in the face, rather than turn our back upon God and Christ, and the Religion of the Gospel.. And this brings me to the second branch of the latter part of the Case, How should believers encourage themselves against sufferings?

In answer to which take these brief Directions:

1. Be often remembring how infinitely more worth the soul is than the body; be often weighing in the scales of sober and serious consideration, a *precious soul* against a *vile body*; and then minde Luke 16. 26. Phil. 3. 21.

thy ſelf, that the worſt which perſecuting enemies can do, *is* to deſtroy a corruptible body, but the worſt which God can do *is to* deſtroy thine immortal ſoul: Chriſt arms his Diſciples againſt fear of ſuffering by this conſideration, *Matth.* 10. 28. *Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the ſoul, but rather fear him which is able to deſtroy both body and ſoul in hell.*

2. Think how inconſiderable time is compared with Eternity; ſpend your thoughts upon the difference vaſt and inconceiveable, between thoſe two; the Apoſtle tells us, *That the ſufferings of this preſent time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory which ſhall be revealed in us*, Rom. 8. 18. The Apoſtle compares himſelf to one that hath been caſting up an account, where on one ſide he meets with nothing but cyphers, or ſmall petty ſummes; but on the other ſide findes thouſands and milllions, and then cryes out, alas, the one is not to be compared with the other! thus the Apoſtles findes *light and momentany afflictions*, on the one ſide, and *a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory* on the other ſide, as we finde him expreſſing himſelf, 2 *Cor*, 4. 17.

3. Remember that the welfare of the body doth depend upon the welfare of the ſoul; not indeed in this world, for here his body may be well, and in good plight, fat and flouriſhing, well fed and cloathed, whoſe ſoul is poor and naked, ſick and wounded in a ſad and deplorable condition; and on the other ſide, a poor beggarly ſick *Lazarus*, may have a ſoul fed with Royal and heavenly Dainties; and cloathed with better Robes than Purple and Ermine; but then the eternal welfare of the body depends upon the eternal welfare of the ſoul; 'tis bound up in the life and welfare of the ſoul, as *Jacobs* life is ſaid to be bound up in *Benjamins*, Gen. 44. 30. and therefore you cannot ſecure the welfare of the outward man, by betraying and caſting away that which is the life and welfare of the inward man.

4. Remember that you can ſuffer nothing in this world, but Jeſus Chriſt hath ſuffered the ſame, or worſe; The Lord Jeſus arms his Diſciples againſt ſufferings by this conſideration, *John* 15. 20. and the Apoſtle *Paul* having experienced it himſelf, adviſeth the believing *Hebrews* to it, *Heb.* 12. 1, 2, 3. *Looking unto Jeſus, &c.* Now this conſideration will ſuggeſt to us.

1. That the worſt ſufferings are no diſhonour to us, ſeeing Chriſt Jeſus the King of Kings hath born them.

2. That the greateſt ſufferings do not ſpeak us the greateſt ſinners:

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ners; Christ sufferings assure us, that the purest and whitest innocency, may be dyed red in its own blood.

3. That the greatest sufferings make us never the less amiable in the eyes of God, for then Christ Jesus the onely begotten Son of God, in whom he was always well-pleased, would not have suffered.

4. We can suffer nothing but what our God, our Friend, our Father, knows we suffer, and knows that a suffering condition is the best for us. When poor Christians are kept by the bloody Inquisition in dark Holes and Caves from the eyes of all the world, they cannot be kept from the eye of God, *Rev.* 2. 13. *I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan seat is*; this was the encouragement which Christ gave his persecuted Church of *Pergamos*; thy condition is known to that God whose heart is as tender, as his eye piercing, and whose arm can reach as far as his eye, and whose wisdome knows how to direct the sufferings of every believer for his own, his Churches, and that believers real good.

5. Be often comparing God and creatures together, that great God who suffers in, and with his suffering people, and those little small things called devils and men that bring sufferings upon them; make thy soul to know and nnderstand the difference between the little trifling bubble promises of the world, and the great precious, solid and massie promises of God; and let faith tell thee, that the threatnings of a raging Devil, a storming *Nebuchadnezzar*, or a furious multitude, are but the noise of a Pot-gun, if compared with the thunder of Gods dreadfull Threatnings. Remember what God saith to his afflicted Church, *Isa.* 51. 12. *Who art thou that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall dye and of the son of man which shall be made as grass? and forgettest the Lord thy Maker, &c?* In a word, think thus with thy self, man cannot do all that he seems able to do, nor all that he resolves and boasts that he will do, but God can do all that he hath said he will do, and he will do, for his suffering servants more than they can hope or think. Let us heartily believe that God can easily recompence us for whatever we may lose for him; but all the creatures in the world are not able to make amends for that which Apostacy from God will deprive us of; Oh Sirs, could we but heartily believe this, what a sorry temptation would persecution be? If this faith were strong, persecution would be exceeding weak: if faith could see, men and devils able to do nothing, and God able to do all things, then persecution would be able.

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able to do nothing; and ſuch a faith would be able to do, and to ſuffer all things.

And thus I have ſpoken to both the parts of this practical Caſe of Conſcience, and ſhall now cloſe up all with a word of Exhortation, That if it be ſuch a real ground of trouble, *&c.* then let us make it our earneſt prayer to God, that our Land may ſtill be a *Goſhen*, and a *Valley of Viſion*, and not an *Ægypt*, or the *vale of the ſhadow of death*, that we may ſtill enjoy the ordinances of the Goſpel, and the company and ſociety of good men; that our lot may never fall among *Ezekiels* Scorpions, or pricking briars, and grieving thorns, *Ezek.* 2. 6. and 28. 24. Let us heartily pray for that bleſſedneſs mentioned *Pſalm.* 65. 4. *That the Lord may chuſe us, and cauſe us to approach unto him, that we may dwell in his Courts, and be ſatisfied with the goodneſs of his houſe.*

How

How is Hypocriſie diſcoverable and Curable?

Luke 12. 1

Firſt of all, Beware of the leaven of the Phariſees, which is Hypocriſie.

WHen our Lord and Saviour had finiſht his heavenly ſoul-ſearching Sermon in the Chapter foregoing, he came ſo cloſe in the application to the Scribes and Phariſees, a proud hypocriticall people, that they (not able to indure their pride and hypocriſie ſhould be ſo ſoundly convinced and openly detected) combined and contrived, (by urging, and watching, and catching words) to accuſe him and ſtop his mouth at leaſt, if not his breath. Theſe contrivances and practiſes of theirs, were not unknown to him that knew all things, and what effect it wrought in Chriſt, you find in this verſe of the Text; he preacheth the ſame things, and in the ſame manner and ſharpneſs of ſtile at the next opportunity. Luk. 11. 53, 54. John 21. 17.

In the meantime, ἐν οἷς, ſaith the greek: in *thoſe*, or in *which* times that they *were* thus plotting and contriving, Chriſt is boldly preaching the ſame Doctrine that they were perſecuting, was as bold for the truth as they were politick againſt it.

And in thoſe very days, and in the midſt of theſe contrivements againſt his preaching; the people as much loved the Doctrine that the Phariſees perſecuted: an innumerable multitude were gathered together to ſee and hear him. A *myriade*, too many thouſands to be eaſily numbred, flocked and thronged ſo to him, that they even trode one upon another, and then he began to ſay to his Diſciples (they were neareſt to him, but ſo as the people heard it,) and he taught

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taught them; and that was his intent, as you may ſee *verſ.* 40, 42.

Firſt of all, Beware of, for the adverb is not to be joyned to the verb *taught*, but to the word *beware*, i. e. πρῶτον, *firſt of all* is not uſed *diſtributively*, but *eminently*; as much as to ſay *chiefly*, eſpe-
Rom. 1. 8. cially *beware*, &c. ſo it is uſed by the Apoſtle, *firſt I thank my God for you all*, (that is chiefly) *that your faith is ſpoken of through the world.*

Beware and avoid this *leaven* of hypocriſie wherewith the Phariſees doctrine and converſation is ſo leavened; take heed, beware eſpecially, chiefly of *hypocriſie.*

In the Text is repreſented a precious Sermon in its preaching, with the circumſtances of it.

Wherein is obſervable.

1. The time, it was in that juncture of time when they had councelled and determined, but had not yet executed their councels.

2. The Preacher, Chriſt himſelf the great Prophet of the Church, in the exerciſe of his Prophetical Office.

3. The auditors, his Diſciples and innumerable multitude of people.

4. His firſt Doctrine is, *Beware of the leaven of the Phariſees* And this Doctrine is confirmed by Reaſon, *verſ.* 2. and improved by inference, *verſ.* 3.

Many uſeful leſſons might be commended from the other particulars, but my meditations are confined to the laſt, the Doctrine, the caution, *Beware of the leaven*, &c. and only ſpend as much time in opening the Text and Doctrine, as will let me in to give direction, *how to diſcern, and how to be delivered from this dangerous leaven of hypocriſie:* which is according to your deſires unto me for your inſtruction in this particular.

The words naturally yield you this Doctrine:

Doctr. *Hypocriſie is a dangerous leaven, which Miniſters and people are chiefly and eſpecially to beware of, and acquit themſelves from.* Hence you
Matth. 23. have a Chapter of woes againſt it.

Iſa. 1. 11, 12. And it is repreſented, as that which renders odious to the Lord,
Iſa. 66. 3. and defiles his choiſeſt Ordinances, and our beſt duties if it cleave to them.

Hoſ. 6. 4. And puts God to ſad complaints and exprobations of ſuch a people: *What ſhall I do unto thee O Judah? what ſhall I do unto thee O Ephraim? for your righteouſneſs is as a morning cloud*: all ſhew, no truth, no ſhowers.

And

And hath been the ruin of many forward and glorious professors, as *Baalam*, *Jehu*, *Saul*, and many other persons of great parts, and many great performances, and one would conceive of great hopes too: but they, and their works, and their hopes all are perished, *the hypocrites hope shall perish.* Job 8.13.

The explication of this Doctrine would lye in the speaking to these particulars:

1. What *hypocrisie* is.
2. How it is resembled by *leaven.*
3. Why called the leaven of the *Pharisees.*
4. Wherein is it so *dangerous.*

1. What *hypocrisie* is: Much of the nature of a thing is many times discovered in its name; the name is a breif description.

The word *hypocrite* properly signifies an *actor* or *stageplayer*, a personater of other men in their speech, habit, and action. The Hebrew word signifieth both a *wicked* man and a *deceiver.* And it is observed, that those whom *David* the devoutest man called *wicked*, *Soloman* the wisest man calls *fools*, and *Job* the most upright man calls *hypocrites*: all is but one and the same thing under divers names.

Hypocrisie then is but a feigning vertue and piety it seems to put on, and vice and impiety it conceals and would seem to put off. It is indeed *vice in a vizor*: the face is vice, but virtue is the vizor. The *form* and nature of it is *imitation*: the ends are *vain glory*, to be seen of men, or some *gain* or *carnal* respects.

There is a *gross* hypocrisie whereby men pretend to the good they *know* they have not: and there is a formall *close* hypocrisie, whereby men deceive others and themselves too; are hypocrites and do *not know it*: In this case it is probable the *Pharisee* was, and those signified by the *five foolish Virgins*, and all *formall* Christians that are not regenerated by the spirit, nor put into Christ by faith. Luk.18 Mat.25.

This is a subtle evill, a secret poyson, a close contagion; and here it is infinite mercy and grace that we do not all split and perish. and if we can scape this, if we are indeed sincere, we are out of the greatest danger of all the leaven of hypocrisie. To direct you to find out, and to purge out this, shall be my especiall endeavour at this time.

2. How is hypocrisie resembled by *leaven?* Briefly thus:

1. Leaven is hardly discerned from good dough by the sight, and as hardly is hypocrisie distinguished from piety: *You outwardly*

Matt 23.18. 1 Cor.5 6. *appear righteous unto men, but within you are full of hypocriſie and iniquity.*

2. Leaven is very ſpreading, *a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump*: and ſo it is a great deal of miſchief hypocriſie doth, it ſpreads over all the man, and all his duties, parts, performances, leavens all, as we may obſerve, *Iſa.* 1.12,13,14,15. *Eſa.* 66. 3.

3. Leaven is of a ſour taſt, and ingratefull ſmell; ſo is hypocriſie to God and man, *I will ſpread dung upon your faces, even the dung of your ſolemn aſſemblies*: all were *leavened* with hypocriſie, and were accounted and favoured but as *dung* in the noſtrils of the Lord. How odious and loathſome was that ſervice of *Annanias* and *Saphira*, both to the holy Ghoſt and to the Church, becauſe it was leavened with hypocriſie.

Mal 2.3. Act 5.

4. Leaven is of a ſwelling nature, *it extends* and puffs up the dough: and ſo doth hypocriſie; it is all for the *praiſe of men*: the Scribes and Phariſees were all for preheminence, chief places, chief ſeats, chief appellations, to be called *Rabbi*, *Rabbi*: and if others will not admire and overvalue them, they will admire and advance themſelves: *I am not as this Publicane. You are they that juſtifie your ſelves, but God knoweth your heart, for that which is highly eſteemed among men, is an abomination to the Lord.* They highly eſteemed of themſelves, they juſtified themſelves: they derided Chriſt for not having the ſame thoughts of them: Pride and vain-glory is the inſeparable companion, if not the mother of hypocriſie.

Matth. 18. Luk.16.14,15

3. Why is it called the leaven of the *Phariſees?* Becauſe they were leavened with it to purpoſe, they were exact and ſupereminent in this diveliſh art of perſonating and counterfeiting to the life. The devill indeed is the arch-hypocrite of the world, *transforming himſelf into an Angell of light*: his firſt-born in this generation are the Scribes and Phariſees; his next born the *Jeſuites*, ſo like their predeceſſors the Phariſees, that a man may believe that Chriſt looked ſo farre as to them in *Matth.* 23. and ſtrook at them through the Phariſees ſides, that they were indeed the types, but the Pope Cardinals, Prelates, and Jeſuites, the antitype. Their Doctrines are alike leavened, they both ſet up traditions, ſuperſtitious cuſtomes and forms, againſt and above the Word of God, when once they come in competition: they both would ordinarily ſuſpend and diſpence with Gods commands, but moſt rigorouſly impoſe their own, and that under ſevere penalties: and both upon the account of extraordinary

dinary holineſs, and high actings of devotion. And ſo for their converſation, there was groſs hypocriſie in all to be ſeen; prayed in corners of the ſtreets, gave alms openly, disfigured themſelves that they might appear to faſt, So the *Jeſuites* (if we may believe ſome of themſelves being converted) and many of the *Seculars* that know them well enough, affect the name, but hate the reality of true piety and devotion. They would be accounted as *Henry* the 4th. of *France* ſaid of them, *Timothies* at home in the Colledge, *Chryſoſtomes* in the pulpit, and *Auguſtines* in diſputation, this they would be accounted. though it be *nomen inane & crimen immane*, they would have the name though not the thing; for that is the nature of the leaven of the Phariſees which is hypocriſie. Math. 6, 4, 5, 6.

4. Wherein is this leaven of hypocriſie ſo dangerous, that Miniſters and people, ought firſtly, chiefly to beware of it? A very little and briefly of that:

There is great danger *of* it, and great danger *by* it.

There is great danger *of* it: 1. For we have the ground of the matter in our ſelves, *hearts deceitfull above all things, and deſperately wicked; who can know* thy wickedneſs? *I the Lord ſearch the heart, and try the reins*, &c. As if none beſides the Lord knew the bottomleſs depths and deceits of the heart. In the heart are thoſe luſts and affections, that feed and foment all the hypocriſie in the world: pride, vain-glory, concupiſcence, carnall wiſdom; were it not for theſe, there would not be an hypocrite living. Jer. 17. 9.

2. The Devill watcheth night and day to ſet fire to this towe, he is fitted to the purpoſe, and filled with raging deſire to comply with a filthy heart, and to ingender this ſpurious off-ſpring of hypocriſie. He hath in readineſs his wiles, and his depths, his baits, and his ſnares; and for a falſe heart, hath falſe ways, falſe Doctrines, falſe faiths, falſe ſeaſons, falſe ends and aims, *vix caret effectu*, when two ſuch be agreed to ſuch a purpoſe, hardly will they be fruſtrated.

3. And that we may not be ſecure, there are before our eyes and in our view dreadfull examples: *Balaam* a great Prophet, *Judas* an Apoſtle familiar with Chriſt: *Saul*, *Jehu*, *Herod*, and *Agrippa*, famous Kings: *Five Virgins* conſpicuous and moſt confident: *Ananias* and *Saphira* eminent converts: *Alexander*, and *Demas* confeſſors, and in ſome degree Martyrs: it may grieve and make a tender heart tremble, to think, what they became, and what is become of them. To teach him that ſtandeth to take heed leaſt he fall, and all

of us to our dying day, to *beware of the leaven of the Phariſees which is hypocriſie.*

2. And there is great danger *by* it: 1. The loſs of all that is done: Mat. 19. Chriſt will ſay as to that young man *yet thou wanteſt one thing*, ſincerity: would'ſt thou have Heaven too? why then didſt thou all things for *the praiſe of men? thou haſt thy reward*, and art over-paid: *depart* Mat. 7. 23. *from me you that work iniquity.*

2. Fruſtrating of hopes, great hopes, hopes of glory and Heaven, Job 8. 13. and eſcaping eternall miſery: all theſe hopes muſt *periſh* to the *hypocrite*: periſh like a ſhip at the very mouth of the haven, periſh whiles they are crying *Lord, Lord*: periſh into everlaſting horrour, and eternall diſpair.

3. Full detection, and manifeſting of them in the ſight and face of Luk. 12. 2. all the world, for *there is nothing covered that ſhall not be revealed, nor hid that ſhall not be known*: the vizor will be then taken off which was feigned ſanctity; and the face will appear which was indeed double iniquity, and for going about to couſin God, and the world, and his own ſoul, the miſerable hypocrite will be left to eternall, intollerable confuſion. To be deteſted, and derided by God, Angels and Saints; to be inſulted on by the devils and damned to all eternity.

Luk. 12. 47. 4. And in Hell the hypocrite *ſhall be beaten with many ſtripes; for he knew his Maſters will*, and pretended he was doing of it, and yet *did it not*. Shall he that judged others to Hell lye lower in Hell, and have more of Hell than thoſe condemned by him? ſhall it be Mat. 24. 51. worſe with a proud Phariſee than with a Publicane, nay a damned Publicane? is Hell the portion of Hypocrites? are they the freeholders, and all others but tennant and inmates with them? or elſe if there be a worſe place in Hell, muſt it be theirs? it muſt be ſo, for the nearer Heaven the more of Hell, and that will be *the Hell* of Hell to all eternity. Surely then hypocriſie is a dangerous thing, there is exceeding danger of, and danger by this *leaven of the Phariſees, which is hypocriſie.*

Uſe. I ſhall commend but one Uſe to be made of this Doctrine at this time, and it is the *beware* in the Text.

To ſtir and provoke you to put forth your utmoſt care, diligence and circumſpection, to *beware of this leaven of the Phariſees, which is hypocriſie.*

Here I could ſhew you how much you are concerned to beware of the Phariſees leaven in Doctrinals, to beware of Doctrines advancing

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advancing any thing in man; or of man: doctrines that are derived from any other fountain, than the pure Word of God, as traditions, Enthusiasmes, impulses, besides or against the Word: doctrines of will-worship, superstition, voluntary humility, *&c.* doctrines ascribing too much to, and laying too much stress on externals in worship not instituted by Christ: doctrines of rigid imposition of things indifferent: doctrines that have a tendency to blind obedience and implicite faith. Whoever reads the New Testament, may soon discern such were their doctrines, and this is the leaven of the Pharisees in doctrinals; and truly you had need to take care of this, for doctrines and principles have no small influence on conversation and practice.

But I shall choose rather to prosecute this Use, by endeavouring to give an Answer and resolution to two Questions, which together constitute a great and weighty Case of Conscience.

Quest. *How may we discover and find out this subtil close evil of hypocrisie, and convince our own and others souls that we are guilty of it, and under the danger of it?*

I must here first premise some general *Cautions*, and then produce some particular *evidences* and discoveries of it. I shall not meddle at all with gross hypocrisie, which is usually known both to the Hypocrite himself, and frequently apparent to others too. *Some mens sins are open beforehand, going before to judgement, and some men they follow after:* 1 Tim. 5. 24. But I shall labour to trace out and unkennel that *latent*, close, and deep *Hypocrisie*, formally *self-deceiving Hypocrisie*, whereby the Hypocrite may cousin others, and himself too

Here 1. I must premise these Cautions and Negations;

1. That *hic labor, hoc opus*, my task is very hard, my work *difficult*, nice and curious; that it is very difficult to find out the hypocrisie of ones own heart, much more to convince others of the hypocrisie in theirs, for the *heart of man is deceitfull above all things*. And hence the most serious, inquisitive, jealous, and heart searching Christians have to call God in to their help in this work, *Search me O God and know my heart, try me and know my reins*, &c. Search my heart and try my reins, examine whether there be any way of wickedness in me. *Caution* 1. Jer. 87. 9. Ps. 139. 23, 24.

2. That as difficult as it is, yet it is *possible* and feasible, for we are not commanded impossibilities, when we are required to *search and try our ways and turn unto the Lord*: to examine our hearts and to *prove our selves whether we be in the faith*: whether *our own hearts* *Caution* 2. Lam. 3. 40. 2 Cor. 13. 5. 1 Joh. 3. 19.

condemn

condemn us not, *David*, *Hezekiah*, *Job* and *Paul*, 2 Cor. 1. 12. theſe all examined their own hearts, and attained thereby to a knowledge and ſenſe of their own ſincerity. And we are not directed to abſurdities, when we are cautioned to *beware of men*, to take heed of thoſe that *come in ſheeps cloathing*, *but inwardly are ravening Wolves*. And we are not herein bid to make Brick without ſtraw,

1 Cor. 2. 11. for *the ſpirit of a man which is in him knoweth the things of a man*, and

Prov. 27. 19. *as face anſwereth to face* in a glaſs, ſo doth the *heart of man to man*. Nay we have a far grater help, *viz.* the Spirit of God which *ſearcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God*. One of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit in the primitive Church, and very neceſſary for thoſe times (in which Satan was very buſie, and the Canon of Scripture not compleated) was the gift of *diſcerning of ſpirits*: ſome think that by vertue of this gift, *Peter* diſcerned *Ananias* and *Saphira* their hypocriſie, and afterwards *Simon Magus* his too, *which Philip* could not do, as not having that gift, or ſuch a meaſure of it; but indeed there was no need of any extraordinary gift to diſcern *Simon Magus* by; to any man that had reaſon and but common illumination, *Simon Magnus* his hypocriſie might eaſily and clearly appear in that motion of his [*Sell me this gift.*] Who but an hypocrite could have thought it had been to be ſold? and who but an hypocrite would have offered money for it? It was eaſie to conclude him in *the gall of bitterneſs, and the bond of iniquity*.

1 Cor. 12 10.

Acts 5.

Acts 8.

And the Miniſters of the Goſpel have authority, calling, and commiſſion (and therefore gifts) to detect and bewray the guiles and wiles, the depths and deceits and ſnares of Satan, much more the workings and turnings of mens deceitfull hearts; and the Word of God (which is the main and principall weapon of their warfare)

Heb. 4. 12. *is quick, and powerfull, a diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart: and it caſts down imaginations, and brings into captivity every*

2 Cor. 10. 9 *thought to the obedience of Chriſt*. Therefore while we have this Word and Spirit, it is poſſible (though difficult) to diſcover the hypocriſie of our own ſpirits, and to direct others to find out theirs.

Caution 3. It is not a poor ſouls fearing and doubting his hypocriſie, accuſing and charging himſelf with it, crying out of himſelf as a wretched man by reaſon of it, that concludes and determines he is ſuch. See *David* in *Pſal.* 51. 10, 11, 12. charging himſelf ſo; and the Church

Iſa. 63. 17. accuſing her ſelf of *erring from Gods ways, and having their hearts hardned from his fear*; and yet their own expreſſions in the Verſes before,

before, manifeſt the frame of their ſpirits to be exceeding tender and humble. Holy Mr. *Bradford* would many times ſubſcribe himſelf in his Letters, *John the hypocrite*, and *a very painted ſepulchre.* *Agur* one of the wiſeſt men living, condemns himſelf for being *more bruitiſh than any man, and not having the underſtanding of a man.* And *David* one of the holieſt and devouteſt men living, upon an ordinaty temptation, *viz.* the proſperity of the wicked, was very apt to charge the wayes of God with unprofitableneſs; *Verily I have cleanſed my heart in vain, and waſhed my hands in innocency*; but afterward ſeeing his errour, he chargeth it ſo upon himſelf, that he upbraids and condemns himſelf for *fooliſh and ignorant, and a very beaſt before God.* It is uſuall with the beſt men to have the worſt thoughts of themſelves: Verſ. 15, 16. Fox his Acts and Mon. Prov. 30. 2. Pſal. 73. 13. Verſ. 22.

1. Partly, becauſe as God will give moſt grace to the humble; ſo there is great need of giving more humility to thoſe that have moſt grace. 1.

2. Partly, becauſe where there is true grace, there is an inſatiable deſire of more. The children of God have never enough of *communion* with God, nor of *conformity* to him: they ſeldome look back and ſay, this thou *haſt*: but ſtill preſs forward to this thou haſt *not*, and this thou *maiſt* and this thou *muſt* have. 2. Phil. 3. 12, 13.

3. And partly, becauſe as there is much difference between faith in its *direct* and its *reflected* act between knowing God, and knowing that we know him; between believing, and knowing that we believe: ſo there is between having ſincerity, and finding a feeling of it conſtantly; between not being hypocrites, and a conſtant confidence of it; which would amount to no leſs than full aſſurance. This is not granted to all, and ſeldome to any at all times, that ſo there may be a ſeaſon for the exerciſe of other graces, humility, fear and trembling, fear of ſollicitude, and diligence in making our calling and election ſure. And this is to be remembered and obſerved, *viz.* That God likes us never the worſe that Satan is ſo much our enemy; but much the better, that by humility, lowlineſs of mind, and ſelf-denial, we ſeem to be our own enemies. 3. Phil. 2. 12. 2 Pet. 1.

4. Nor are they foul failings, nor dangerous failings into groſs ſins (if a man die not impenitently in them) that do conſtitute an hypocrite; indeed raigning ſin doth. *The falls of Gods people may be Horrenda tempeſtates, & ſtenda naufragia.* The grievous falls of Gods people do evidence there is hypocriſie *in* them; but not that *they* are hypocrites. *David* was guilty of adultery and murther, and *Caution* 4.

and puſt up with exceeding pride and vain-glory, in the multitude of his Subjects, and ſtrength of his Kingdome: but *Davids* repenting and riſing again, cleared him from being an hypocrite, ſo that the Spirit of God teſtifies from his own mouth, that *he was upright,*
Pſal.18. *and kept himſelf from his iniquity*, i. e. from the raign and continuance of it; and after his fall he was called a man after Gods own heart: *Thou haſt not been as my ſervant David, who kept all my*
1 King.14.8. *Commandments, and followed me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in my ſight.* The Lord overlookt his adultery and murther; for indeed he had *put away* his ſin (or made it *paſs over*, as it is in the *Original*) that is to Chriſt, *Hezekiahs* heart was lifted up, and he rendered not according to the benefit done unto
2 Chron.32. him; but *Hezekiah* was humbled, and the wrath of God came not
25.26. upon him all his dayes; he was not an hypocrite, no *he did that*
2 Chron.29.2. *which was right in the ſight of the Lord, according to all that his father David had done.* So *Peter* denied and forſwore his Maſter, of many warnings, and many promiſes to the contrary; yet he repented and *wept bitterly*: his fall ſhewed him to be a weak frail
Job 13.23. man; but proved him not hypocrite. *Job* confeſſed himſelf a ſinner, and that many were his *iniquities* and *tranſgreſſions*; but *Job* would
Job 27.5,6. never confeſs himſelf an *hypocrite*: no, he would keep his *integrity* till he died; for it is not the falling into ſin, or the being guilty of it; but
Pſal.66.18. *regarding iniquity in the heart*, that denominates an hypocrite; other-
Rom.3. wiſe all men were hypocrites, for certainly all men are ſinners, all ſhut up under ſin.

Caution 5. 5. Nor is it backſliding into the ſame ſinnes that makes a man an hypocrite: *David* had got into *a way of lying* to ſave his life: *viz.* 1 *Sam.* 21. in the 2d verſe he told one lye, in the end of the verſe another, and in the 8th, verſe another. He prayes that God would take from him *the way of lying* And the promiſe of Mercy and par-
Hoſ.14.4. don is not only to ſinners, but backſlidings; *I will heal their back-*
Jer.3.22. *ſlidings.* And ſuch are invited to return to God: *Return thou backſliding Iſrael, and I will heal your backſlidings Behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God.* Indeed to be *bent to backſliding* is a dangerous ſign of prevailing hypocriſie, and yet ſome in this
Hoſ.11.2,8,9, caſe ſhall turn and *walk after the Lord.* We do not read of the peo-
10 ple of God, that they did revolt and backſlide into the ſame groſs ſinnes after repentance; nor *David* into adultery, nor *Peter* to faintheartedneſs, nor *Paul* to perſecution. But yet this may be ſo, and proviſion is made in that caſe, by the promiſe of healing backſlidings.

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backslidings. Though it cost them dear to recover their peace, after revolting into gross sins; after pardon and peace spoken; and it will lie upon their consciences as an heavy aggravation of their sin and folly. But yet it doth not conclude that all was done in hypocrisie before, and that they were but meer hypocrites; no more than *Solomons* falling and Idolatry (which he repented of, witness the book of *Ecclesiastes*) doth conclude him an hypocrite when he built the Temple, and was the *Jedidiah*, the beloved of the Lord. 1 King 11. 9. Psal. 85. 8.

6. Nor is it every degree of tendency to hypocrisie, that denominates a man an hypocrite, and brings him under the condemnation to have his portion with hypocrites. For there is the seed of this as well as of all other sins in the heart: and the holy Prophet *Jeremy* cries out, *the heart is deceitful*, &c. he meant his *own* heart as well as *others*; and *Solomon* the wisest man gives this advice, *keep thy heart*. Proverbs were experiments, his own, and *David* the devoutest, saith, *all men are lyars*, all deceitful; and there are the remains of hypocrisie in the best, the reign of it is only in hypocrites; hypocrisie may have its *presence*, but not *predominance* in the sincerest children of God. Thus you see what doth not conclude an hypocrite, though it come very near. *Caution* 6. Jer. 17. 9.

2. Now I shall shew what cannot clear and acquit a man from an hypocrite, though it proceed very fairly, and very far, which makes it so difficult to discover this leaven of the Pharisees, hypocrisie.

1. It doth not acquit and discharge a man from this charge of hypocrisie: That they hear the Word with some delight; that they believe with some faith, so did the *stony ground*. That they take some pains for it, so did they *Joh.* 6. That they perform some duties in obedience to it, so did *Herod*, Mark 6. That they are moral and without blame in some things outwardly, so was the *young man*. That they are zealous against some publick corruptions, so was *Jehu*. That they have illumination and excellent knowledge, by a common work of the spirit; so have the *Devils*, *Judas*, and those *Apostates*, Heb. 6. That they had some sweet tastes and relishes from the Word imbraced, so had they in *Heb.* 6. and no doubt *Ananias* and *Saphira* had. Nor doth this acquit them and set them out of danger, that they have some serious cares and fears about their salvation: so had *Felix*, so had the *sinners in Zion*, they were *afraid*, *fearfulness hath surprized the hypocrites*: they were afraid of dwel- Matth. 13. Matth. 19. Isa. 33. 14.

Rom. 8. 15. ling with *devouring fire, and everlasting burnings.* *Judas* and *Spira* had fears to purpose: and the spirit of bondage is but a common work of the spirit, if it rest there; in *Pharaoh* there was fear but no sincerity: in the Devils, fear but no penitency: nor is it some reluctancy against sin by an awakened conscience; *Herod* had so, and *Pilate* had so, *Balaam* so: nor many desires of good; *Balaam desired to die the death of the righteous*, The *five Virgins* desired Oyl: there be the *desires of the sloathful, that even kill them*; desires like the Prov. 26. 14. *turning of a door upon hinges*, never the farther off: desires of the Jam. 1. 6, 7. wavering man, the *double-minded man*, when a man hath *some* Aug. in Confess. mind to grace, but *more* to lust: as *Augustine* that prayed for grace and chastity, but his heart secretly prayed the while, *not yet Lord.* Jonah 3. 8. There may be powring out of prayers as the *Ninevites*, they cried Isa. 26. 16, 17. mightily; *they powred forth a prayer when thy chastening was upon* Psa. 68. 34, 36. *them* and yet they brought forth but wind: *When he slew them then they sought him, and they returned and enquired early after God*; *nevertheless they did but flatter him with their mouth, and lied to him with their tongues*, &c. Nor is it some hopes, *Matth.* 25. *Job* 8. 13. *Luke* 18. If all this cannot save a man from the guilt of hypocrisie, and portion of hypocrites, what shall? *If these come short of Heaven, where shall they appear that come far short of them?* Oh then who can be saved, *Streight is the gate, and narrow is the way that leads to* Luk. 13. 24. *life, and few find it.* Salvation work is to be wrought out *with fear* Phil. 2. 12. *and trembling.* Beware then of the leaven, *&c.*

How then may we know how it is with our souls; whether we are in the number of hypocrites, and tending to their portion? whether this deluding, destroying, predominating, damning leaven of hypocrisie be in us?

Sign 1. 1. A loving of the world, and the things of the world; *the lust of* 1 Joh. 2. 15, 16. *the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life*: this is a fearful evidence of hypocrisie, for it is inconsistent with, and destructive of, the Matth. 22. 37. love of God; and the loving God above all things, is the very *essence*, the *summa totalis* of sincerity, and whatsoever contraries this, is the very *essence* of hypocrisie. I know there be many subterfugies and evasions, and it is an hard matter to convince men, that they love the world in S. *Johns* sense. But if a man make these lusts of the eye, of the flesh, and pride of life; honours, riches, carnal and sensual pleasures, his aim, his interest, his chief delight: If the heart and affections be let out to these things immoderately: If the *sweetest*, freest thoughts of the soul be let out to them; either about the getting,

getting, enjoying, or desiring; or admiring, or advancing them. If the activity and indeavours of the soul bend and are imployed chiefly this way; though there may be many excellent performances, expressions, affections, yet the leaven of the Pharisee is there, and sours all, and all the rest is but in hypocrisie. This leavened all *Balaams* pretences, divinations; all his goodly expressions, and professions, both to God, the Angels, and men; that he would do nothing, speak nothing, but what God would have him; (as much as to say, he would be upright, and sincere,) yet still he looked after the reward, (*Balaaks* promotion,) this was the error of *Balaam*, *he followed the wages of unrighteousness*: and this leavened all *Judas* his hearing and conversing with Christ, his over-officiousness. Some conceive from *Judas* his kissing Christ in the garden, *&c.* that he was more than ordinarily familiar and officious about him, and made more pretences of love and service to him, but he appeared a *painted sepulchre*, an hypocrite; he loved the *wages of iniquity*, it was the world and hypocrisie were predominant in him; and now he is gone *to his own place*, the place and portion of hypocrites: he was as it were out of his place, or in anothers place all the while before: and this leavened all the Pharisees alms, fastings, prayers, professions, and pretences; they were *covetous* saith one Evangelist: and they *loved the praise of men more than the praise of God*, saith another: and that is in effect, they loved the *favour* of men, more than the *favour* of God: in short, they loved the *world*, *and the love of the Father was not in them*. There can be *no serving God and Mammon*, if we cannot moderate and temperate affections, both in the desires, in the affections, in the use, in the injoyments, and moderate our cares and griefs in the loss and want of worldly things; to have them as if we had them not, to rejoyce in and for them as if we rejoyced not: to grieve for the want of them as if we grieved not: seeing they are to us as if they were not; they are a *scheame*, a representation that passeth away. Nay if the *world* be not *crucified* to us, and *we to the world*, we are still in danger of this gall of bitterness, *this leaven of hypocrisie*. This is exemplified in the *Jews* in *Babylon*, they would come to the Prophet, *and sit before him as Gods people* (with much seeming reverence, and appearance of devotion and affection) *they hear thy words but they will not do them, for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness*. Therefore as you love your souls, beware of the love of the world, and set not your affections on things be-

Luke 16. 14. John 12. 43. 1 John 2. 16. Matth. 6. 24. 1 Cor. 7. 27, 30. Gal. 6. 15. Ezech. 33. 31. Jude 11.

low, but on things above, else you will not be able to avoid the guilt and danger of hypocrisie.

Sign 2. 1 Thes. 1. 5. 2. *A not loving the Word of God, a not receiving it as the Word of God, when it comes as the Word of God in power.* It is the property of the Word of God to be *quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing of soul and spirit, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, to cast down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.* This is the Word of God, and this it doth as the Word of God, these are the properties of it. Such a Word of God an hypocrite cannot love, because he loves this carnal sinful self, he loves his lusts which this Word opposeth. *He flattereth himself in his own eyes until his iniquities be found to be hateful.* The Word in power will shew him that all is ill, when he flattereth himself that all is very well. *Hast thou found me, O mine enemy*, saith *Ahab*? An hypocrite thinks he hath no greater enemy than a faithful Minister, because hypocrisie hath no greater enemy than the Word of Truth, which will detect and make it odious. So *Ahab* hated *Micaiah* and his Ministry, because *he prophesied evil to him*, in his evil wayes, he spake the Word of God, the truth to him, which *Ahabs* corrupt life, and hypocritical heart could not bear. *Herod* heard *John Baptist* gladly in other things, but when he preached against *his having his brothers wife*, when he came home to his conscience, to his very darling sin, then *Herod* stopt his mouth, *shut him up in prison. Felix* trembles, and dismisseth *Paul* when he came so close; an hypocrite may love to hear the same Minister on another subject. The very notion of Religion is amiable and acceptable to ingenuous persons, nay he may love the Word, may come to others, but *to himself* (during the predominacy of hypocrisie) that the powerful Word neither read, nor preached can be welcome, because it applies it self to the cutting off of his right hand, and plucking out his right eye.

Psal. 36. 2. 1 King. 21. 20. 1 King. 22. 8. Mar. 6. 17, 18, 20. Act. 24. 25. Mat. 5.

Sign 3. 3. A long and continual unprofitableness under the powerful Word of God, is a fearful sign of hypocrisie. What warnings and instructions had *Judas*? What convictions and reprehensions had *Ahab* and *Herod*? and yet as to those things which the word opposed they were still the same men. If men that hear much, mind nothing, if there be no change, no alteration, but they are still where and what they were, where they are still as carnal, as earthly, as they

they were ten, twenty years ago, though they hear much, and are as *earth that drinketh in the rain*; nay though *they have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come*, if yet they bring not forth *meet fruit for him that dresseth it, that ground is rejected, that heart is near to cursing and burning*, there is some guile and hypocrisie there, there would be some growing else. When the word is *precept upon precept, line upon line* (*i.e.* very plentiful) and yet no amendment, there is hypocrisie, they will fall backward, *be broken, and snared and taken*. Oh 'tis no small matter to be dead, unprofitable, unaltered hearers. It is a fearful sign of hypocrisie, and that there are many hypocrites in the bosome of the Church.

Heb. 6. 7, 8. 1 Pet. 2. 2. Hos. 6. 4, 5.

4. The *principles* and *ends* of mens actions and performances are a great discovery of the sincerity, or insincerity of mens hearts. If mens *principles* be no higher than good education, and being conversant with good or strict men; which seems to be *Paul's* case, or no higher than good nature and moral qualifications, this seems to be the *young man's case*; they are no farther than those were at that time, in an ignorant and insincere condition. He that is really and sincerely a good Christian doth all as *from God* and *Christ; he is all, and in all!* Christ is *wisdome* and *sanctification* to him. He acts and performs duties not only from strength of parts, and acquired qualifications, but from strength of grace, and infused habits, *from* God, and *for* God, from a *new heart*, Ezek. 36. 25. from the *Law written in the heart*, from the *love of God shed abroad in the heart*, and *constraining* to love; from the *Divine nature* communicated to the *heart*; from *Christ* by his *Spirit dwelling in the heart*; from the *fear* of God *possessing* and *establishing* the heart. These be the *springs* and *principles* of a sincere Christians spiritual life and actions; and where they act and bear rule, it is no wonder if such motions and performances be produced, as the world may admire, but not imitate. *Saul's* life (after his Conversion) was a kind of *constant miracle*, so much he did, and so much he suffered, and so much denied himself, that if he lived in these dayes his life would be a miracle; but yet if we consider the *principles* that he was acted by, the great wonder will be, not that he did *so much*, but that he did *no more*, for saith he, *Christ liveth in me, and the life that I live, I live by the faith of the Son of God*, &c. And so the *ends* of a mans actions are a great discovery of sincerity or hypocrisie. If a mans *ends* be lower than God himself, and obeying, glorifying, walking with, and injoying God,

Sign 4. Act. 26. 5. Phil. 3. 5, 6. Mark 10. Col. 3. 11. 1 Cor. 1. 30. Rom. 11. 24. Jer. 31. 33. Rom. 5. 5. 2 Cor. 5. 19. 2 Pet. 1. 4. Eph 3. 17. 2 Cor. 3. 5. Jer. 32. 40. Gal. 2. 20.

God, if either praiſe, gain, reputation, nay acceptation *with* good people; nay if a mans end be to ſtop the mouth of natural conſcience *only*, or *only* to avoid danger and wrath to come. Theſe may be the works of a Saint, but yet the ends of an hypocrite. And *omnis actio niſi modificata à fine ſuas quas avertere amittit laudes. Balaam* ſpake religiouſly, multiplied Altars and Sacrifices, but his end was not God, but the wages of iniquity. *Jehu* deſtroyed *Ahabs* houſe, executed vengeance, Gods judgements againſt that wicked Family, reſolutely and throughly deſtroyed *Baal*, &c. but his ends were carnal, the eſtabliſhment of the Kingdom to him, and *his* Family: *Ahab* and the *Ninevites* faſted in ſackcloath, but it was *meerly* to avoid the judgement threatned. The *Iſraelites* cried and prayed, but they did *but howl for corn and wine*. The *Jewes* in Captivity faſted, but *did you at all faſt to me, even to me*, ſaith the *Lord*. *It* ſeems men may pray, and yet not cry to the Lord, faſt, and yet not to the Lord. It is the *end* dignifies, or debaſeth the action, rectifies or adulterates it. Look to your ends if you would not be hypocrites. If your *end* be leſs than God, his glory and pleaſing of him; You are but *empty Vines, and bring forth fruit to your ſelves*. *Simplicity* in ones *ends* accompany *ſincerity* in the *actions*; when not *fleſhly wiſdome, but the grace of God* carries and governs the action, then we may *have rejoycing*, elſe all may be in hypocriſie.

Hoſ. 7. 14. Zach. 7. 5. Hoſ. 10. 1. 2 Cor. 1. 12.

Sign 5. 5. If thou canſt not bring thy heart to *ſuffer* for the Name of *Chriſt*, when thou haſt a good *Cauſe*, and a good *Call*, and amongſt the good *people* of God, though thou *hear the word, and receiveſt it with joy, for a time, yet when perſecution ariſeth* becauſe of the Word, *by and by thou art offended*; if there be no more deep rooting of it in thee, but in temptation thou fall away, it is apparant thy *heart is* but *ſtony ground*, and thou art *leavened* with *hypocriſie*. If your *faith* cannot bear the tryal, if it be not *furnace* faith, *tryed* faith, *it is* not *precious* faith, it is but *common* faith, *counterfeit* faith; it will not be found *to praiſe honour and glory at the appearance of Jeſus Chriſt*: nay if thou canſt not (in ſome caſes) chooſe *to ſuffer affliction with the people of God, rather than enjoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon, and eſteem the reproach of Chriſt greater riches than the treaſures of Egypt*; it is apparent thy *faith*, and thy *heart* is not *right*, thou haſt not a thorough *reſpect to the recompence of reward*, thou doſt not *ſee him that is inviſible*. That man that cannot, will not *deny himſelf, take up his croſs, and follow Chriſt*, he is not a true Diſciple of Chriſt, and in the end will find, that in *ſaving his life he hath loſt it*. Sathan and

Matth. 13. 21. Luke 8. 13. 1 Pet. 1. 7. Heb. 11. 25, 26, 27. Matth. 16. 24.

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and Antichriſt muſt be *overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of the teſtimony, and by not loving our lives to the death*, &c. and he that will not *ſuffer* with Chriſt, ſhall not *reign* with Chriſt; and if tribulation occaſion men to go out *from us, it is becauſe they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us.* Tribulation is the touchſtone, it will diſtinguiſh ſincerity from hypocriſie: and though it is true a hypocrite may *ſometime* ſuffer, yet he that will *never* ſuffer, muſt be a hypocrite; if *we ſuffer* not with him, we ſhall not reign with him. Rev. 12. 11. Rom. 8. 17. 1 Joh. 2. 19. 1 Cor. 13. Rom. 8. 17.

6. If thou embraceſt and favoureſt any *iniquity in thy heart*, if there be any corrupt luſt, or ungodly way that thou art ſo wedded to, that thou canſt not, wilt not be divorced from, but huggeſt it in thy boſome, hideſt it, pleadeſt for it, though it ſeem never ſo harmleſs and tolerable, yet if it be againſt Gods Law, though *thou makeſt many prayers* with the *Jews*, and performeſt many ſervices, and doſt many things with *Herod*, and haſt many glorious and gracious expreſſions with *Balaam*, yet thou art in the gall of bitterneſs, and bond of iniquity. Thy *heart* is a *divided* heart, thou art a *double, unſtable perſon*, thy prayers will not be regarded, and all thy ſervices will be rejected by the All-ſeeing jealous God, *before whom all things are open and naked*, and with whom thou haſt to do, becauſe *if thou regardeſt iniquity in thy heart*, the riſe and root of all thy duties and performances, is but the *leaven of the Phariſees which is hypocriſie*. Me thinks beloved this ſhould ſtartle us, and I wiſh it may, if any of you ſhould be *prickt at the heart*, and *tremble at this word* of God; and ask me *what ſhall we do* that we may acquit our ſelves from this leaven of hypocriſie, and be ſaved from the wrath it expoſeth us to? I ſhould anſwer, *Sign* 6. Pſal. 66. 18. Iſa. 1. 16, 17, 18. Mark 6. Hoſ. 10. 2. Jam. 1. 6, 7. Heb. 4. 13.

1. *Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate, for many will ſeek, but ſhall not be able*; that is, be *very ſerious*, and throughly reſolved, and induſtrious in a caſe of this weight and concernment, *Be diligent that you may be found of him in peace. Set your heart to theſe things for it is not a vain thing for you, becauſe it is your life*, &c. It is ſo weighty a buſineſs, that it is work enough for all your life, and it will be your life of conſolation from which will flow, peace, and joy, and aſſurance. Make but this out clearly that thou art no hypocrite, that hypocriſie is not predominant in thee; but that *in ſimplicity and ſincerity of heart thou haſt thy converſation* (not with carnal wiſdome) thou haſt then occaſion of much rejoycing; but if thou art negligent in this, thy doubts and fears will hang upon and keep thee Luke 13. 24. 2 Pet. 3. 14. Deut. 32. 46, 47. 2 Cor. 1. 12.

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low to thy dying day; nay it were well if that were all, for to be *negligent* in this buſineſs, is as good as to *do nothing*, for it is to do nothing to purpoſe, and that is to have all thy work undone, and to be undone thy ſelf for ever. Moſt hypocrites did *ſeek* to enter in; *Balaam*, *Herod*, the *five fooliſh Virgins*, had they *ſtrove* they had entred in at the ſtrait Gate. Wiſhings and wouldings, and loathful deſires to heaven will not place you out of danger of hypocriſie, for very hypocrites have done as much; but ſtriving indeed, ſetting your whole heart to it, being very diligent to *purge out this leaven*, *working out your ſalvation with fear and trembling*, *giving all diligence to make your calling and election ſure*; this will place you out of danger, and give *you an abundant entrance into the Kingdome of our Lord*. If ever that of the *Engliſh* Proverb be true, it is here, *As good never a whit, as never the better*. Indeed there is ſo much work on our hands, ſuch commands, ſuch promiſes to believe, ſuch corruptions to ſubdue, ſuch temptations to reſiſt, the careleſneſs of carnal ſailing in any of which will charge us with hypocriſie. So many ſuch ſubtile and powerful adverſaries to conflict withal, ſuch a world, ſuch a fleſh, ſuch principalities and powers, and ſpiritual wickedneſſes in high places, ſuch deceitful hearts, deceitful above all things, to ſearch, and ſift, and purge from this leaven, that it is impoſſible to be free of it without mighty ſtriving, contending, and giving much diligence.

Phil 2.12. 2 Pet. 1.10,11.

2. If you would take heed of hypocriſie, take heed of *ſecurity*. There are no greater flatterers, and no greater deceivers of themſelves and others than hypocrites, they flatter themſelves in their own eyes; all flattery is dangerous, but *ſelf flattery* of all other moſt dangerous, and of all others in the buſineſs of ſalvation moſt *pernicious*. It is the advice of the Devil, and thy own hypocriſie, to favour thy ſelf, flatter thy ſelf, hope well, *&c.* The advice of God is, *Search and try your wayes*, *examine your ſelves*, 2 Cor. 13. 5. *Work out your ſalvation with fear and trembling*. Yea call upon God to ſearch you. It is a fear of carefulneſs, and ſollicitude, a trembling of jealouſie and ſuſpicion, as to our own hearts, not of diffidence, or deſpair as to God, that we are directed to. Had the fooliſh Virgins had but this care, this fear, they had had *oyl in their veſſels*, as well as *Lamps*. Had thoſe glorious profeſſors in *Matth.* 7. 22. had but this jealouſie, and ſuſpicion, they might have eſcaped that diſmal ſentence, *Depart from me you workers of iniquity*. Perhaps your faith may be but a fancy, your hopes but preſumptu-

Pſal. 36. 2. Lam. 3. 40. Phil. 2. 12. Pſal. 130. 23. Joh. 8. 13.

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ons *a ſpiders web*, perhaps your fruit may be but that of an *empty vine to your ſelf*; perhaps your prayers may be but *howlings for corn and wine*; perhaps your faſting may not be to God, *Commune much with your own heart, and let your ſpirit make diligent ſearch, keep your heart with all keeping*; be jealous of every thing your heart hath to do with; your affairs, friends, comforts, recreations, thoughts, ſollicitudes, graces. Oh bleſſed or happy is the man that *thus feareth alwayes*, he ſhall never do amiſs, this is to be in *the fear of God all the day long*; and this *fear of the Lord is the beginning of wiſdome*, the *end* of wiſdome, and *wiſdome* it *ſelf*, for this will make a man wiſe to eſcape the wiles of Sathan, and the hypocriſie of his own heart, and ſo make him wiſe to ſalvation.

Hoſ. 10. 1. Hoſ. 7. 14. Zach. 7. 5. Pſal. 72. 6. Prov. 28. 14. Prov. 23. 17. Prov. 1. Eccleſ. 12. Job 28.

3. *Keep God alwayes in your minds*, if we have all *from* him, we ſhould be all *to* him; If we live and move in him, our hearts and minds ſhould be alwayes on him. This is the cauſe of all the wickedneſs and hypocriſie in the world, men will *not ſeek after God, God is not in all their thoughts*. And this is the ground of all the glorious performances of the Saints, they *ſaw him that was inviſible*, as *Micaiah ſaw the Lord in his Throne*, and therefore feared not to deal plainly and ſincerely with *Ahab*, though on his Throne. When the Pſalmiſt had convinced and reproved the wickedneſs and formal hypocriſie of ungodly preſumptuous men, he concludes, *Now conſider this you that forget God*, &c. Intimating this to be the reaſon of all ungodly hypocritical converſation, a forgetting God. The remedy muſt be contrary to the diſeaſe: if we would be no hypocrites, we muſt much remember, think of, and obſerve, and eye God by faith. *Acquaint thy ſelf with God, and ſo good ſhall come to thee.* If men were acquainted with God, and did not forget him, acquainted with his Omniſciency, *Pſal.* 139. 1,2. with his All-ſufficiency, *Gen.* 17. 1. with the power of his anger, *Pſal.* 90. 11. the infiniteneſs of his goodneſs, *Iſa.* 55. 7,8. they would conclude, and live under the awe and power of ſuch concluſions. Oh then he is too *great* to be tempted and provoked, too *excellent* to be ſleighted and undervalued, too *good* to be loſt, too *wiſe* to be deceived, and this would ſuppreſs and ſupplant the leaven of the Phariſees *hypocriſie*.

Rom. 11. *ult.* Pſal. 10. 4. Heb. 11. 26, 27. 1 King. 22. 19. Pſal. 50. 22. Job 22. 21. Mic 7. 18, 19.

4. Be much and daily in the *renewing faith and repentance*. If there be ſuch danger of hypocriſie, there is neceſſity of renewing faith and repentance for fear hypocriſie may be in them. Riſe and return as ſoon as thou art convinced of thy ſin, ſo did *Paul*, ſo did *Peter* as ſoon as the Lord turned and looked upon him. If repen-

Gal. 1. 16. Luke 22. 61.

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tance were haſtned after ſin, and thou wouldeſt take care and pains to break thy heart conſtantly for ſin, this would break it from ſin. A man ſhould find that *it were an evil and a bitter thing to forſake the Lord, and that his fear was not in thee, and a broken heart God would not deſpiſe,* becauſe it is apparent that is no hypocritical heart. And though former faith and repentance may be counterfeit and hypocritical, yet enſuing and renewed faith may be ſound and ſincere, and we have much ground to renew thoſe acts, whoſe ſoundneſs and validity we have much ground to ſuſpect, if all have been falſe or fained, or partial formerly, we have the more cauſe in a new act to give up and bind our ſouls ſincerely to it, and this will free you from hypocriſie.

Jer. 2. 19.

Pſal. 51.

5. Put forth your greateſt ſtrength and care to mortifie thoſe luſts and corruptions that are the fewel to *hypocriſie, pride,* vainglory, worldly-mindedneſs, ſelf-love. Theſe are the fewel of hypocriſie, they beget it, and they nouriſh it. If the love of the world, and worldly favour did not prevail much over men, there would be no hypocriſie in the world; and cheriſh and ſtrengthen the graces which cannot conſiſt with it, but will be alwayes fighting againſt, and oppoſing it, as love to God, humility, ſelf-denial, heavenly-mindedneſs, mortifying the fleſh, much communion with God, *if theſe be in you and abound, you ſhall not be barren nor unfruitful, but ſhall make your calling and election ſure,* and ſo be out of the *peril,* yea and much out of the *fear* of hypocriſie.

6. *Preſs* the Lord much and *urge* him cloſe with the *promiſes* of a *new heart, of circumciſing your hearts,* and cauſing you *to love the Lord with all your heart, of putting his fear into your heart.* If he urge and preſs you (in his word) with his precepts, and your duty, do you urge and preſs him as much in your prayers) *with his promiſes,* ſpread his own hand-writing and ſeals *before him*; as *Auguſtine* relates his Mother did in her prayers for his Converſion; ſay, Lord theſe promiſes were made to be made good to ſome, and why not to me? I hunger, I need, I thirſt, I wait; here is thy hand-writing in thy Word, and in the laſt Sacrament, I had thy Seal affixed to it, I am reſolved to be as importunate till I have obtained, and as thankful afterwards, as by Grace I ſhall be inabled, being convinced I am utterly loſt and undone, if thou heareſt not *the deſires of the humble* in this particular, and if thou doſt hear and grant, I am ſo well acquainted with my ſelf, and mine own heart, that I have nothing to glory

Eze. 36. 25, 26. Deut. 30. 6. Jer. 32. 40.

Aug. *Conf. Chirographa tua ingerebat tibi.*

Pſal. 10. 17.

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glory in, but I shall wholly *glory in the Lord*; and I do resolve and believe I shall, to eternity celebrate and magnifie the riches of the glory of thy Grace. Thy promises are the discovery of thy purposes, and vouchsafed as materials for our prayers; and in my supplications I am resolved every day to present and tender them back to thee every day, and if thou wilt have regard to them there, and appear to be a God of truth to my soul, a poor creature that hath long feared to burn in hell for hypocrisie, will be made, secured, and made happy for ever. I am resolved to wait upon thee, and to cast my soul upon thee in this way, and thou hast assured me thou art a *God of judgement*; thou didst promise in judgement, thou knewest what thou didst in making such promises, and thou wilt be a God of judgement, thou knowest when and where to make them good, and thou hast pronounced, *Blessed are all they that wait for thee*; and on thee I will wait, and for this blessing I will hope and look. Oh beloved, if there be but such an heart in us, and such wrestlings, as *Ambrose* told *Monica*, a soul of such prayers and tears should not perish. Isa. 30. 18. Aug. *Confes. Impossibile filium tantarum lachrimarum perire.*

I could have added much more, but if these Characters and Directions be carefully observed, you will beware of, and shall escape the leaven of hypocrisie. And that you may be careful to observe them,

Consider 1. That the purging out this leaven, is the great care and business of a Christians life; this will afford him fear and trembling work to his dying day; this till it be done, makes *the gate so streight, and the way so narrow to life*, that *few find it*, *and if* it be done, renders all the service of Christ ever after an *easie yoak*, and a *light burden*. Matth. 7. 13. Matth. 11. 30.

2. This if it be done gives us actual possession of the *Kingdom of God* in grace, which consists *of righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*, and administers an assured and *abundant entrance into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ in glory*. Rom. 14. 17. 2 Pet. 1. 11.

3. This will prevent the Devils everlasting insulting over us; is this the end of all thy praying and hearing, *&c.* and defying me? nay upbraiding Christ, as a learned and holy man feared; I have him, I have gotten him from thee, for all thy blood, thy Miracles, thy Gospel, thy wooings, thy beseechings, thy knockings and strivings of thy Spirit; for all thy illuminating them, and making them taste of the powers of the world to come: I have cousened thee of them at thy very gates of heaven, and by my devices shipwrackt them in the very *Basil.*

very mouth of the haven. Oh I would not give the Devil occasion
Basil. to upbraid and insult thus against Christ at the last day for the world. And this would prevent consciences gnawing and galling to eternity. What are all my desires, my seekings and knockings, prayers, fasts, Sacraments, hearing in season, and out of season, waiting at the posts of Gods house early and late. Have I forsaken so many sins, denied my self so many contents and pleasures, subdued so many lusts, born so many scoffs, suffered so much in my body and estate, and all for hell at last. This would be the hell of hell; and all this may be prevented, if we would *beware of the leaven of hypocrisie*, and seriously observe those Characters, and carefully practice those Directions.

4. Consider the means you have long had, and yet do enjoy, Gods admirable forbearance and patience, a powerful Ministries incessant labours and pains, an awakened consciences clamours, and warnings; a danger, and evils (if you be negligent) intolerable; a reward (if you observe the *beware* in the Text) eternal and inconceiveable; your life short and uncertain, your death appointed most certain, and you know not how near; the world and the lusts there-
1 Joh. 2. 17. of (even those that feed and foment hypocrisie) passing away, and
2 Cor. 6. 2. that now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation: And if you were ever serious in your lives now be so; and if ever God spake to your hearts and consciences, the Lord in mercy speak this, *Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees.*

What

What must Christians do, that the influence of the Ordinances may abide upon them?

1 Chron. 29. 18.

O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel our Fathers: keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee.

IN the preceding Chapter we have *Davids* Oration, or if you will his Sermon, the design of which was, to excite the people to a contribution for the erecting of a Temple, and promoting the publick worship of God. It begins *vers.* 2. of that Chapter, and is continued to the 6th *verse* of this *Chapter.*

This Sermon was effectual upon the auditory; *David* had the happiness (which the best Orators, and most powerful Preachers often want) not only πιθανὰ λόγια, but πειθὼ: he not only spoke what was in it self perswasive, but did actually perswade his hearers to comply with his design. The effect thereof is expressed *vers.* 6, 7, 8. *they offered*, and (which was the marrow and fatness of their offering) *they offered willingly.* Though will-worship be the worst service of all other, yet those that serve God willingly are the best worshippers: and therefore *David* in this Sermon commends such service to his son, *chap.* 28. *vers.* 9. *And thou Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind.* None serve God with a perfect heart, but those who serve him with a willing mind; to such a temper were the people wrought by this powerful exhortation, *vers.* 9. *with a perfect heart they offered willingly to the*

the Lord. Hereupon *David* much affected with his ſucceſs in this affair (*David the King alſo rejoyced with great joy*) his ſoul being now upon the wing, he flies to God by prayer, and therewith concludes his Sermon. The prayer conſiſts of petition and thankſgiving, both of them, not conformed to any common model; but ſuting the particular occaſion now before him. He bleſſeth God for making ſuch an impreſſion upon the hearts of the people, as moved them to offer, and *after this ſort* to offer, ſo chearfully, ſo generouſly; from *ver.* 10, to 18. and beſeecheth God ſtill to keep their hearts in ſuch a temper, to make this holy impreſſion durable and abiding, *ver.* 18. *O Lord God of Abraham*, &c. *keep this for ever in the imaginations*, &c. Where we have the inforcement of the petition and the matter of it. It is inforced from the Covenant of God, by vertue of which, he was *the God of Abraham, Iſaac, and Iſrael*, and had laid an obligement on himſelf, to have a gracious reſpect to their poſterity; hence this expreſſion is frequently uſed, being no ſmall incouragement to the faithful, to pray for Covenant-mercies, and to pray in faith.

The matter of the Petition, that which he prayes for is, that the effect which his words had upon the people might be durable and continuing, that the efficacy thereof might abide upon their ſouls, and every part thereof: that it might ſink into the depths of their hearts, and ſtick faſt there: that it might pierce through their fancies and *imaginations* into their mind and *thoughts*, and through their *thoughts* into their *hearts* and affections; that the Lord would continue it there, and continue it long there, even *for ever*.

David was apprehenſive what a ſlippery and inconſtant thing the heart of man is, how like a deceitful bow, to which he elſewhere compares it, how apt to ſlacken on a ſudden, when it hath been bended to any good inclinations or reſolutions, by the power of the Word, or any other Ordinance. What an unhappy womb it is, how ordinarily holy motions miſcarry before the heart hath gone out its full time with them. What danger there was, leſt their righteouſneſs, which now made ſuch a flouriſhing appearance, might prove like the morning cloud, or the early dew. And therefore having raiſed their hearts to ſo good a poſture, he takes the beſt courſe to fix them there. His words having had a powerful influence upon their ſouls, he uſeth the beſt means to render it durable and abiding. Hence Obſerve,

The

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The people of God ſhould endeavour to keep the influence of the Ordinances abiding upon their ſouls. Doctr.

I muſt not proſecute this Doctrine in the uſual method, but mention it only, as leading us to the Practical Caſe at this time to be reſolved. A conſcientious hearer obſerving what his duty is, will be preſently inquiſitive how he may perform it, the *duty* is made known in the Obſervation, the *inquiry* is in the Caſe before us.

What muſt be done that the influences of the Ordinances may abide upon us? By the *Ordinances* we underſtand thoſe principally which are publick, the Word, Sacraments, and Prayer. The Text and this exerciſe leads us to have a more ſpecial reſpect to the Word, which we ſhall a little obſerve, but ſo as not to exclude the reſt. By the *influence* of the *Ordinances*, is meant the effect they have upon us, while we are imployed in them; their gracious or comforting efficacy, that which tends to make our hearts and lives more holy or more comfortable; that whereby our ſouls are quickned, ſtrengthned, reſtored or refreſhed. By its *abiding on us*, underſtand the continuance of this effect after the duty is done, that ſo the Ordinances of God be not like thoſe humane Ordinances (the Apoſtle ſpeaks of) which *periſh in the uſing*, Col. 2. 20, 22. If you would have it ſtated clearly and more at large, take it thus; *What courſe muſt we take that the gracious and comforting efficacy of publick Ordinances may not only reach us while we are imployed in them, but may continue on us afterwards; ſo as we may walk under the ſenſe and power thereof all along?*

To reſolve this without further preamble, the courſe you muſt take for this purpoſe, lies in the practice of ſome things; and the avoiding of others. The things to be practiſed take notice of in theſe ſeverals:

1. Get new hearts, and get them daily more and more renewed; an old heart is a heart of ſtone, *Ezek.* 11. 19. and the hardneſs of it is not removed but by degrees. Now that which will ſink deep into a tender heart, a heart of fleſh, (*Ezek.* 36. 26.) will glide off from an old heart as water from a ſtone, without leaving any impreſſion: and where none is left none can continue. The good ſeed which fell on ſtony ground, it ſprang up indeed, but it continued not, *it withered away as ſoon as it ſprang up*, Luk. 8. 6. but they which with an honeſt and good heart heard the word, they *kept it*, and brought forth fruit with patience (*i. e.* with perſeverence,) *ver.* 15. the fruitful influences of the word abode upon them: A good and honeſt heart not only hears the word, but keeps

keeps it; not only brings forth fruit, but perſiſts ſo doing. The more tender, humble, and ſpiritual the heart is, the more ſpiritual fruit and advantage doth it reap from the Ordinances, and the longer doth it continue in poſſeſſion of thoſe advantages; the leſs the ſoul is renewed, the more reſiſtance doth it offer to the Ordinances; and the more they are reſiſted, the weaker is their efficacy; and the leſs their efficacy is, the leſs while doth it continue. A heart throughly ſanctified, is to the Ordinances like tinder, which ſoon takes fire, and is apt to keep it till it be forced out: whereas a carnal unmortified heart, is like green wood, whoſe moiſtneſs giving check to the activity of the fire, is not ſoon kindled, and will ſoon go out, if it be not well lookt to. Naturaliſts obſerve, that tranſmutation is eaſie in ſymbolical elements, ſuch as agree in ſome prime qualities: water is more eaſily turned *into air than into fire.* A holy and ſpiritual heart will be eaſily wrought on, by holy and ſpiritual Ordinances; for here is an agreement in qualities; and the more agreement the leſs oppoſition, and the leſs the oppoſition is, the more eaſily will it be maſtered; the power of the Ordinances will more eaſily both take place and keep poſſeſſion. Holineſs makes the ſoul both receptive and retentive of holy impreſſions. Make it but your great buſineſs to grow every day more holy; and it will not be ſo hard a matter, to have the Ordinances work effectually on you, or to have their efficacy continue with you.

2. Labour to be much affected with the Ordinances *while you* are imployed in them. Slight impreſſions will be ſoon worn out: and weak influences will quickly ſpend themſelves and vaniſh. If the Ordinances have but little effect upon you, while you are under them, it is not like to laſt long: for that which is little is near *to nothing*, and that which is ſo near to it, may ſoon come *to nothing*. It is not enough that your hearts be a *little* warmed, but they muſt burn within you, (*Luke* 24. 32.) while Chriſt is ſpeaking to you, or you are ſpeaking to him; if you would have that heavenly heat to be laſting. The good ſeed miſcarried upon one ſort of ground in the parable, becauſe it had no *deepneſs of earth*, Mat. 13. 5, 6. it *quickly withered becauſe it took no deep root.* If the Ordinances pierce no further than the ſurface of the ſoul, if the work of them be but ſuperficial, if they do not penetrate into the depths of the heart: the efficacy of them is not like to continue. Therefore prepare your hearts before you draw near to God, get them ſo diſpoſed

fed as they may be capable of lasting influences. The Text directs us to this, O Lord keep this for ever in the imagination, &c. *and prepare their heart unto thee.* Then is the heart prepared to the Lord when it is made *tender*, and *sensible*, and *open*. Bring tender hearts to the Ordinances, get them broken up beforehand, break up your fallow ground and sow not among thorns, *Jer.* 4. 3. *Hos.* 10. 12. A tender heart drinks in divine influences, they insinuate themselves more easily into the intimate recesses of it. That which can make no impression at all upon a Flint, will sink deep into softned wax.

Come with *sensible* hearts, apprehensive of your spiritual wants and necessities, burdened with your lusts, and corruptions; pained with your inward distempers and soul-grievance. I cannot commend to you any thing more effectual, to make you capable of great and lasting advantages. Such a quick sense of your spiritual condition will *open* your hearts, and make them ready to receive so much from the Ordinances, as will not be soon spent. Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it, *Psal.* 81. 10. Now it is desire that opens the heart, and the stronger the desire is, the wider is it opened: Then is the soul wide open when it pants and breaths after God, when it hungers and thirsts after holiness, as appears by equivalent promises, *Psal.* 107. 9. *Matth.* 5. 6. Blessed are they who *hunger and thirst* after righteousness: *for they shall be filled.* That which we get by holy duties, is soon spent because it is so little: and we get so little, because we desire no more. We come to the Ordinances *tanquam canis ad Nilum*, too like the Ægyptian dog, which laps a little as he runs by the side of *Nilus*, but stays not to drink: we take but a taste of them as *in transitu*, to little and too cursorily; whenas Christ invites us to eat and drink abundantly, *Cant.* 5. 1. Such cursory tasts may chear you a little, but they will not furnish you with strength for continual service: you must feed and feed hungrily, and come with a strong appetite, that you may be capacious of much; a little will not serve you long.

3. Mind the Ordinances after your use of them, be much in meditation if you would have the efficacy of Ordinances to continue long. Be often considering what you have heard, what you have prayed for, what you have received and are obliged to by the Sacraments. Much of Heaven and holiness, is engraved on these Ordinances, and the seal is as it were set upon the heart, while you are

under them: but after-consideration lays more weight on it, and impresseth it deeper, and so makes the characters both more plain and more durable; for the deeper they are the longer will it be, ere they be defaced.

Most men lose their souls, and the best men lose great advantages for their souls, for want of consideration. There is a quickning, a healing a comforting, a strengthning virtue, in the Ordinances; and this vertue may fall upon your souls, while you are imployed in them: but you cannot expect it will stay with you, unless you fix it there, and no better way to fix it, than consideration. This will rouze it up when it lyes dormant and unactive; this will put spirits into it, when it grows weak and languid; this will both diffuse and fasten it, yea it will heighten and improve it. *My heart was hot within me* (saith *David*, Psal. 39. 3.) *while I was musing the fire burned.* The heart takes fire at the mind, *and it is musing* or consideration that kindles it, and keeps it in, and blows it up: those sparks which fall from heaven upon your hearts, while you are hearing, or praying. *&c.* they'l die, they will go out, and come to nothing unless you do ἀναζωπυρεῖν, 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. unless you blow them up by meditation. *He sent forth his word and healed them*, Psal. 107. 20. The Word hath a salve for every soul-distemper, but that it may be effectual, the plaister must be laid on, and kept on too, till the cure be wrought; the Preacher may apply it, and lay it upon the distembered part, but it will not be kept on without meditation. *How sweet are thy words unto my taste*, saith *David*, Psal. 119. 103. How came they to be still so sweet? why, *they where his meditation day and night*, the delitious relish of them still continued, because he kept them still upon his palate, by ruminating and musing on them.

The Word of God in the Scripture is as honey in the combe, *ther's* that which is incomparably sweeter: now by meditation you squeeze out this sweetness, and it will be still dropping comfort and sweet refreshment upon your souls, while you are *pressing* it by consideration. 1 *John* 2. 14. *I write unto you young men, because ye are strong, and the Word of God abideth in you.* If you would be strong and continue so, the Word of God must *abide* in you; now how can it abide in you, if it have not leave to stay in that, which is but the portal of the soul, if it abide not in your mindes? You lose all for want of consideration, both the gracious and comforting influences of

of the Ordinances, ſlide from you through this neglect. And no wonder it is ſo great a dammage to you, ſince it is ſo great a ſin, you caſt the Word behind your backs, and throw the Ordinances at your heels, when you do not minde them after you have done with them; and will the Lord encourage any with a durable bleſſing, under ſuch guilt? will not this provoke him rather to curſe your bleſſings, and blaſt them in the bud? Meditation is a known duty, and commonly inſiſted on, and therefore you may be tempted to ſleight it; whereas indeed upon this account, you ſhould the more regard it; for ſince it is a known duty, the neglect of it is a known ſin; now to ſay nothing how inconſiſtent it is either with grace or comfort, to live in a known ſin, how can you expect the efficacy of Ordinances ſhould be continued, while you neglect the means, which the Lord hath appointed, and commended to you, as moſt effectual for the continuance thereof? The bleſſing of the Ordinances will not abide upon him, who continues in ſin, eſpecially when his ſin, is the neglect of that *medium*, which ſhould fix the bleſſing upon him.

4. Let the efficacy of the Ordinances be purſued preſently into act, if they convince you of any neglected duty, fall immediately upon the practiſe of it. If they make you more reſolute, againſt any carnall or worldly luſt, betake your ſelves preſently to the mortifying of it. If they kindle any holy affection to Chriſt or his people, give ſome real expreſſion thereof without delay. If they revive any languiſhing grace, let it be forthwith exerciſed. This was *Davids* practice, *Pſal.* 119. 60. you will find this one of the beſt expedients, for the fixing and ſecuring of thoſe good motions, which are raiſed in your mindes and hearts by the Ordinances. When the bloſſoms of a fruit-tree are once knit, though the flouriſh thereof be gone, and you ſee nothing but the bare rudiment of the expected fruit; yet you think it more ſecured from the injury of froſts and winds, than if it were ſtill in the flower; good motions when they are once reduced into act, are thereby as it were knit, and brought to more conſiſtency. They are then well paſt one of their critical periods, where moſt miſcary, and ſo are more like to live, and continue with you. Beſides the act ſtrengthens that good motion and diſpoſition which leads to it, and ſo makes you more ready for another act and that diſpoſeth to more acts, and thoſe to better, and repeated acts beget a habit, and this (as the Philoſopher

tells us) is μονιμώτερον ὕ, ſomething that will ſtay by you. The hearts of the people being raiſed by *Hezekiahs* zealous ſpeech, 2 *Chron.* 29. they were kept up in that poſture, till the work deſigned by him was finiſhed (till Religion was reſtored and reformed) and how came this to paſs? Why, *the thing was done ſuddenly*, verſ. 36. he purſued the peoples good inclinations, and brought them into act ſuddenly, he ſtruck while the iron was hot. When your hearts are heated by the Ordinances, ſet immediately upon your work; the *primus impetus* affords a great advantage if it be improved, poſſibly in the vigour of it, you may overcome thoſe great difficulties and oppoſitions, which have been too hard for you formerly, and may otherwiſe give you impediment hereafter; and this being maſtered, your progreſs will be eaſier, you may go on towardes heaven under the power of the Ordinances, with leſs interruption and fewer interciſions of theſe divine influences, *Jam.* 1.22,23. *But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers onely, deceiving your own ſelves; for if any be a hearer of the word and not a doer, i.e.* if he do it not preſently (as appears by what follows) *he is like to a man beholding his naturall face in a glaſs; for he beholdeth himſelf, and goeth his way, and ſtraightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.* The glaſs diſcovers what ſpots and ſullages are in his face, that he may waſh them off, or what is diſordered about him, that he may correct and compoſe it; but if he do not this preſently, if he put it off till ſome occurence, divert him from the thoughts and remembrance of it, his looking in the mirror, will prove but a loſs of time, a vain curioſity. Your uſe of the Ordinances is like to prove no better, if you practiſe not what they lead you to without delay, its like to be no other, than ſuch a viewing of your ſelves in a glaſs, a meer fruitleſs ſpeculation.

5. You muſt take much pains with your hearts, if you would have them retain the vertue and efficacy of the Ordinances. The effect of them ſhould be as a nail faſtned in a ſure place, but the heart is ſo hard and knotty a piece that you cannot drive it in without many blows; it will require all your ſtrength to force it in far enough, and all your care and watchfullneſs to keep it in when it is there. They groſly miſtake Chriſtianity, who take it to be conſiſtent with our carnall eaſe and ſloathfulneſs, who place it in notions or opinions, in fair ſhews, and a ſpecious profeſſion, in forms, geſtures, or external obſervances, in conforming to this or that mode

of

of Worſhip or Diſcipline. It were well for the World if one could be a Chriſtian at ſuch an eaſie rate: but they that pleaſe themſelves with ſuch conceits, they erre not knowing the Scriptures. The action of a Chriſtian is all along in the New Teſtament, expreſſed by ſtriving, wreſtling, running and combating, exerciſes, wherein he that will not be worſted, moſt intend all his ſpirits, ſtretch all his ſinews, put forth all his ſtrength; he that is a Chriſtian indeed, he muſt παλαίειν, *Eph.* 6.12. διώκειν, *Phil.* 3.12,13,14. *Heb.* 12.14. ἀγωνίζεσθαι, *Luke* 13.24. his daily courſe muſt be a combating as for victory, a running as for a Crown, a ſtriving as for life. The power and life of holineſs can neither be attained, nor upheld, without an effectuall uſe of the Ordinances; the Ordinances will never be effectuall to purpoſe, unleſs the vertue of them abide upon the heart; now it meets with ſuch reluctancy and oppoſition from the heart (ſo far as it is unrenewed) that it can never be faſtned there, without ſtriving and ſtrugling and earneſt contending, it muſt be done in deſpight of our own eaſe, and carnall humors and naturall inclination, and all the reſiſtance of the body of death. If you think this too much, you think much to be Chriſtians indeed, however you pretend to the name. Thoſe that are acquainted with their own hearts, find it very hard to get them raiſed to a ſpirituall and heavenly temper, very difficult to get them pullied up (though they have the advantage of the moſt powerfull Ordinances) to any good poſture; and when with much ado they are got up, exceeding difficult to keep them there. Alas we ſeem to be forcing a weighty ſtone up a ſteep hill, when with much toyl we have got it near the top, take but our hands off a little, leave it but to it ſelf, and down it runs further in a moment, that we can get it up again in ſome hours. Our way to heaven lyes up the hill, that which is ſpiritual and heavenly is above us, the natural bent and tendency of our hearts is downwards; as there is no getting them up without toyl and paine, ſo when we have raiſed them a little, leave them but to themſelves, grow but a little remiſs and negligent, and down they run on a ſudden, we ſhall quickly find them at the bottom of the hill, in a carnall, lukewarm earthly temper. When our hearts are effectually touched and raiſed, and moved in the uſe of Ordinances, there's no keeping them in a quick and lively motion, without ſtriving and ſtrugling, and as it were forcing them on with might and main. The influence of the Ordinances falling upon a

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sloathfull soul is quite lost, and meerly thrown away upon it, *Prov.* 12. 27. *The sloathfull man roasteth not that which he took in hunting.* So he loseth all his former labour because he will not take a little more pains, a sloathfull soul loseth all the advantages he gets by following the Ordinances, for want of care and industry to retain and improve what he hath gotten.

6. Comply with the Spirit of God. These influences both as to the rise and continuance of them are from him. When you comply not with him, you grieve the Spirit, and provoke him to withdraw; and when he withdraws, these influences will be discontinued. If you detain the truth in unrighteousness, if you confine it to your mindes, so as the power thereof descends not upon your hearts and affections, comes not forth in your lives and actions, you do κατεχειν imprison the truth, and that is a great affront to the Spirit of Truth. If when the Spirit of God calls you to take up the Cross, to leave all to follow Christ contentedly and cheerfully in a low reproached afflicted condition; or if when he calls you up to a higher degree of self-deniall, mortification and holiness; you hang back, or turn aside, and refuse to follow his conduct, this grieves the Spirit of holiness. If you decline his institution for other devices, shrink back from the work you are engaged to, when it grows hazardous; strain your consciences to secure your outward enjoyments, will not be influenced by him, further than is consistent with your ease, credit, safety and worldly interest, you dishonour the Spirit of wisdome. This provokes the blessed Spirit to withdraw, and when the fire is gone, the heat will not long continue. If you refuse to continue under the influences of the Spirit in some things, its righteous with him not to continue them upon you in others. If you fear the displeasure of man more than the grieving of him, if you lean more to the hopes of this life, than his supports, and consult with flesh and blood instead of being directed by the wisdome which is from above; it will be no wonder if he give you over to your own conduct, and intermitting his own, leave you under the influences of your carnall fears, and worldly hopes.

7. Be frequent in the use of Ordinances, good impressions do most usually wear off in the intervals of holy duties, and the longer these are, the more danger there is, therefore make these interims as short as may be by quick returns to the Ordinances. It

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is obſerved that places under the line are not ſo hot, as ſome climates at a further diſtance from it, and this reaſon is given for it, thoſe under the equinoctial, though they have the Sun more vertical, and the beams falling perpendicularly, cauſe a more intenſe heat; yet the nights being of equal length with the dayes, the coolneſs of thoſe long nights doth more allay the heat than where the nights are ſhorter. Long intermiſſions of holy duties are like long nights, you may finde them by experience to be great coolers, if you live under more powerfull Ordinances, than ſome others, yet if they be more frequent and diligent in the uſe of what they have, they are like to have more ſpiritual warmth than you, and that with leſs allay and intermiſſion. Beſides when the advantage you have got by one Ordinance is declining and wearing off; the uſe of the ſame, or of ſome other, may revive and recover it, if you take it ſpeedily before it be too far gone. Further, a ſlieght impreſſion, ſuch as is not like to laſt long, may be re-inforced for a longer continuance, if you lay your ſelves quickly under the inſtrument that firſt made it. When *Elijah* had once taſted of the proviſion the Lord made for him in the Wilderneſs, he *laid him down* ſaith the Text, as having enough; but the Angel calls him to it again, for ſaith he, *The journey is too great for thee*, 1 King. 19. 6,7. Hereupon he aroſe once more, and did eat and drink, and *went in the ſtrength of that meat forty dayes and forty nights*, verſ. 8. Once taſting will not ſerve your turn, a little will not be enough, ſo long a journey as yours is will ſpend much; nothing but a frequent, and often repeated uſe of the Ordinances will furniſh you with ſuch ſtrength as will laſt you many dayes.

8. Finally, Look up to God for the continuance of this influence, pray, and pray in faith. Seek him and depend on him for it, *He will be found of thoſe that ſeek him*, Matth. 7.7. You have his promiſe for it and dependance on him, obliegeth him too, *the expectation of the poor ſhall not periſh*, Pſal. 9. 18. it is not for his honour to fail thoſe, whom he hath incouraged to rely on him; an ingenuous man will not do it, much leſs the faithfull God. This courſe *David* takes in the Text, he prayes and encourageth his faith while he is praying by that intereſt, which the faithfull have in the Lord by virtue of the Covenant, *O Lord God of Abraham, Iſaac, and Iſrael our Fathers keep this for ever*, yea the Lord himſelf leads us to this *Deut* 5. 24, 27, 29. the people were much affected; in that they had heard

heard the Lords voice, *verſ.* 24. this brought them up to a noble reſolution, *verſ.* 27. *Speak thou unto us, All that the Lord our God ſhall ſpeak unto them, and we will hear it and do it.* Here-upon the Lord thus expreſſeth himſelf, *verſ.* 29. *O that there were ſuch a heart in them, that they would fear me and keep my Commandements always*, &c. What greater incouragement can we have to deſire this of God, than that he expreſſeth himſelf deſirous we ſhould have it? Faith is the main ſtrength of prayer, and the great ſupports of faith are theſe two, that *he is able*, and that *he is willing*. Theſe are to faith like the two pillars of the Temple, 1 *Kings* 7. 21. and the names of them (there expreſſed) are very appoſite. *He ſet up the right pillar, and called the name thereof Jachin*, i.e he *will* eſtabliſh, *he is willing*; and *he ſet up the laſt pillar, and called the name thereof Boaz*, i.e. *in* him is ſtrength, *he is able*. Now faith hath both theſe pillars to ſupport it in this buſineſs that the Lord is able to *continue his in*fluences, you will not queſtion I hope, *He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think, according to the power which worketh in us*, Epheſ. 3. 20 and that *he his willing*, he puts it out of queſtion, when he uſeth ſuch an expreſſion, as amongſt men, ſignifies, a paſſionate deſire, O that there were ſuch a heart in them &c now (ſaith the Philoſopher) ἐν τοῖς θέλω καὶ βούλομαι, &c. that which one is both able and willing to do, ſhall be done. Both reaſon and faith ſee ground enough to conclude this Pray then, and pray believing, for as the Lord is able to do it, ſo it is according to his *will*, and whatſoever you ask according to his will, believing, it ſhall be done, *Matth.* 21. 22.

Thus much for what you are to practice; there are ſome things to be avoided, if you would have the influence of the Ordinances to be laſting, theſe we ſhall comprize in four particulars.

Firſt, Take heed you perform not holy duties negligently, a heartleſs, formal, negligent attendance on the Ordinances, *will* be ſo farre from procuring a durable bleſſing, that it will fix a curſe upon you, *Jer.* 48. 10. *Curſed be he that doth the work of the Lord negligently*, ſee *Mal.* 1. 8, 14. If you invert the Apoſtles advice, 1 *Cor.* 7. and deal with the things of God, as you ſhould do, with thoſe of the world. If you pray as though you prayed not, and hear as though you heard not, and uſe the Ordinances as though you did not uſe them: they will be no otherwiſe effectual, than if there were no efficacy in them, it will continue on you as though it continued not;

not; like that of the Sun in a Winter day, which thaws the earth a little at noon, but so as it is harder frozen up the next night. Therefore let your hearts be ingaged in every holy duty, *Jer.* 30. 21. *Who is this that ingaged his heart to approach unto me.* You must hear as for life, *Deut.* 32. 46, 47 *Set your hearts unto all the words which I testifie among you this day*, &c. *For it is not a vain thing for you, because it is your life*, &c. you must wrestle in prayer, your hearts in this duty should be as it were in a conflict, in an agony, συναγωνίσασθαι is the Apostles word, *Rom.* 15. 13. *Now I beseech you brethren for the Lord Jesus Christs sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me.* Your prayers should be such as the other Apostle describes, *James* 5. 16. *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much*, the word rendred effectual fervent, is ἐνεργουμένη. Now ἐνεργούμενος is one possessed with a spirit, and acted by it. If the word here used look that way, then suitable to the matter to which it is applied, it imports a possession in a good sense. And δέησις ἐνεργουμένη, will be a prayer full of the holy Ghost, wherein that blessed Spirit is operative, exerting its force and *energy*. Such a prayer as shews the soul to be possessed of the holy Spirit and acted by it, so as all the powers of that soul are set a work and put upon motion towards God *effectually*. Such a prayer *availes much*, procures great advantages, and of long continuance.

Generally in all holy Ordinances your souls should stretch out themselves to reach the Lord, they should spring up to him in acts of love and desire, and claspe about him with delight and complacence, and lay hold on him with a humble and filial confidence, and stir up themselves to lay hold on him. We do all fade as a leafe saith the Church, *Isa.* 64. 6. (both their persons and their righteousness did so) and the reason thereof follows *ver.* 7. *There is none that stireth up himself to take hold on thee.*

Secondly Beware of the world, meddle not with it more than needs must; and when it is needfull ingage not therein, but with fear, caution and vigilance. Carry your selves amongst worldly objects and employments, as though you were amongst cheats and thieves: they have the art to pick your heart slily, and to rob them of that which is more precious than Gold, when you little think of it.

Let not your minds and hearts plunge themselvss in the world: nothing sooner nothing oftner extinguisheth divine influences

[illegible] The cares and delights, and employments of the world, when they are immoderate or unlawful, [illegible] the [illegible] like the ill of any Ordinances, if it [illegible] more [illegible] than a world.

[illegible] your hearts are wanton in your closets, you [illegible] be as [illegible] and vain [illegible] the world, as you are [illegible] going into the world, or when you are [illegible] in the world. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the world, when you will [illegible] [illegible] as much care [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] when you would enjoy [illegible] among the most [illegible] [illegible] The further you are above the world, the nearer you will [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] Contemplative men of [illegible] Mountains have [illegible] above the middle Region of the Air, and there [illegible] and figures being drawn in the sand, have been found [illegible] in them the same form and order, unmoved, unaltered a long time after: and the reason is, because they are above those stormy winds, and showers, and storms, which [illegible] and efface any such draughts in this lower Region. The more your minds and hearts are [illegible], the more in the midst of this boisterous world, the less will any thing that is [illegible] and [illegible] take upon them. Let the soul be brought into never so good order, by the help of holy duties: yet a little [illegible] indulging a carnal interest will ruffle, disturb and quite [illegible] it.

When your souls are by power of the Ordinance set on motion towards Christ and Heaven: if you would hold on in a constant course, you must beware of worldliness, and keep free as much as may be from earthly incumbrances and entanglement, *Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us*, Heb. 12. 1. Let us persevere and hold out in that gracious and heavenly course, which the Gospel hath put us on: but that this may be done, one great impediment must be removed, *The sin that doth easily beset us*, we must be *laying off*. Now that sin as some Expositors conceive, is worldliness, and it is probable for *reasons*, being a circumstance *easily*, *easily beset*, if we render it literally, is the sin that hath goodly circumstances. And so sin sets off it self with more goodly circumstances than worldliness, no sin hath more specious pleas and pretences to excuse, vindicate and justifie it self. No sin hath more fig leaves to cover

ver its nakedneſs, and to ſhrowd it from diſcovery and conviction than worldlineſs. This muſt be ſhaken off, it is the great defacer of heavenly impreſſions, the cheif interrupter of holy motions: if you would hold on when the *impetus* which is impreſt on you by any Ordinance, hath ſet you a going; beware of the world, beware of worldlineſs.

Thirdly, Take heed of any inordinacy in affection, inclination or deſign. Such inordinancies give the heart a ſtrong bias, holy duties check it but a little, give it but as it were a ſmall rub: when this is once paſt over: it will hold on, in that courſe to which it is moſt ſwayed. The Miniſtery of *John Baptiſt* had ſome influence upon *Herod*, *He heard John gladly, and did many things*, Mark 6. 20. but ſenſuality being predominant, thoſe better inclinations were quite overpowred. The word had ſome effect upon *Simon Magus*, *He believed*, Act. 8. 13. and being taken for a believer *was baptized, and* afterwards *continued with Phillip*, &c. but a ſtrong affectation of vain-glory ſuppreſſed thoſe better motions, and the worſt got upmoſt. Take heed of any inordinacy as to lawfull things, your relations, ſtudies, ordinary callings, *&c.* this will not ſuffer you to come ſo often to holy duties, to ſtay ſo long in them, or to be ſo intent upon them, as is requiſite for the deep impreſſing of their efficacy: and after they are done, this will hurry your ſouls from under thoſe thoughts and exerciſes, which ſhould fix and ſettle their virtue and influencce upon your minds and hearts. Natural bodies follow the tendency of that element which is predominant in them, a ſtone moves downwards, it would be at the centre; that which ſtops it, offers it violence, and when the force is removed, down it falls freely: Juſt thus doth the heart follow the tendency of theſe inordinancies, if it meet with a ſtop in an Ordinance, that's but an ungratefull violence to it, it will ſtruggle to break through it, will be reſtleſs till the force be removed, till the power of the Ordinance be ſhaken off, which checks an inclination natural and acceptable to it, and what hopes in this caſe, that the efficacy of any holy duty will long continue?

Fourthly, Reſt not in the beſt performance of any duty, nor in any aſſiſtances you find therein, though they be ſpecial and more than ordinary. If this ſatisfie and exalt you, you will be apt to grow ſecure and careleſs, not looking to the improvement of Ordinances when once they are over, and that's the way to loſe all. We

are apt to take moſt dangerous colds, when we are in the greateſt heats. And its obſerved that ſome profeſſors have had the fowleſt falls, after they have been moſt elevated in holy imployments. The reſting upon the *opus operatum* the meer outward performance of a duty, when the heart is not ingaged therein, is an open pit, which none fall into, ſave thoſe that are blind: but the reſting upon the *opus operantis* a duty affectionately performed, is a more ſecret, and ſo a more dangerous ſnare. He that makes account he hath done enough, becauſe he hath done well; may be apt to think he is not obliged to look further after it: and ſo the continued influence of the duty upon his heart and life, which is indeed the principal advantage of it, may be neglected and conſequently loſt for want of looking to.

To conclude, Make not the Ordinances your end, but uſe them as the means to attain it. They are not injoyned us for themſelves, but in order to ſomething more deſirable, their end is ſomething further than their uſe. Take heed you place not all your Religion, in hearing, praying, communicating, *&c.* neither count your ſelves religious enough, becauſe you are much and often in theſe duties, This is to make them your end, and then you will reſt therein, without proceeding further (for the motion of the Agent is terminated in his end): and ſo you will ſtay ſhort of that, for which they were principally intended, *viz.* the keeping of your hearts and minds in a ſetled poſture of holineſs and righteouſneſs: and neglect that, by which this main end of the Ordinances is onely to be attained, *viz.* the continuing of their influence upon you.

So much for the caſe propounded, which I have indeavoured to reſolve (as the nature of it requires) practically: and therefore as there is no time for, ſo there will be leſs need of Application. But that I may not diſmiſs you without ſomething of this nature, having laid your duty before you in the Obſervation, and ſhewed you how it may be performed in ſatisfying the caſe: Let me now preſs you to the performance of it by one Conſideration, which will have the force of a Motive, where there is any ſenſe of ſoul-concernments.

If the efficacy of the Ordinances abide not on you, you cannot be fruitfull under them, at leaſt you cannot *bring forth fruit unto perfection*, (as the expreſſion is *Luke* 8. 14.) you may bring forth buds, or leaves, or bloſſomes, *&c.* but if their influence continue not, that which you bring forth will never come to ripeneſs and *perfection*; it

it will be crude and sowre at best, and sowre Grapes are as bad as no fruit in the Lords account: and unfruitfullnes will provoke the Lord to deprive you of the Gospel and Ordinances, *Isaiah* 5, 2, 6. *Ye looked that it should bring forth Grapes, and it brought forth wild Grapes.——And now go to, I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will take away the hedge thereof.——I will lay it waste that it shall not be pruned nor digged.——I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.* The meaning of this parable (so far as concerns our purpose) is expressed by another threatning, denounced for the same sin, *Matth.* 21. 43. *The Kingdom of God* (*i.e.* the Gospel of the Kingdom) *shall be taken from you, and given to a people bringing forth the fruits thereof.* And Christs threatning of *Ephesus* amounts to as much, *Rev.* 2. 4, 5. *Nevertheless I have something against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.* The first impressions of the Gospel were worn off and vanished. And what follows, *I will come against thee quickly, and remove thy Candlestick out of its place, unless thou repent.* So that this sin will pull up your hedge, and break down your wall, level all your securities; and so lay you open to the boar of the wood, and the wild beasts of the field: such as instead of digging and pruning you, will devour and lay you wast, and *Sharon* will become a desart. This sin will provoke Christ to let the Stars fall out of his right hand: so as you will be left to perish for want of vision. This sin will provoke the Lord to take the Gospel of the Kingdom from you: and leave you under the hellish influences of the Prince of darkness. This sin will overturn your Candlesticks, and extinguish your lights, and leave you nothing but the snuffs. This sin will deliver your strength into captivity, and your glory into the enemies hand. This sin will smite the shepheards and scatter the flock, and lay the heritage of God desolate. This sin will cause your Sun to set at noon, and turn the day of your gracious visitation, into a sad and dismal night. This sin will turn the place which hath been a valley of vision, into a seat of darkness, and a *valley of the shadow of death.*

If then you would avoid a judgement, which strikes not only at your estates and lives, but at your souls: if you would prevent that dreadfull stroke, which may not onely reach your selves, but your posterity, your children and childrens children; if you would not have them and your selves, and thousand and millions with you, bereaved of the Gospel, and the means of grace and life, take all care

care and pains that the influences of the Ordinances do not slide from you, that they be not as water spilt upon the ground. Be faithfull and diligent in the use of the forementioned directions, and all other means which may be effectuall to fix them. And if hereby your hearts are wrought up to such a resolution, *The Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of your hearts.*

FINIS.

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Places of Scripture, Occasionally Explained or Illustrated.

	ch.	vers.	page.
Job	22	21	408
Psalm	19	13	382
	25	4, 5	14
	63	8	95
	66	18	327
	73	25	613
	112	9	286
	139	1, 2, 3, *&c.*	23
Prov.	3	27	251
	11	17	287
	18	20	421
	19	17	286
		24	502
Eccles.	1	2	437
	5	6	580
		2, 3, 4, *&c.*	600
Isa.	44	2	428
Jerem.	11	9	294
Hosea	10	11	562
Matth.	5	22	394
	6	3	248
		33	556
	7	12	265
		14	9
	18	22	396
Luke	6	30	262
		35	255, 256
	11	41	245
	12	33	259
		50	506
	18	22	260
	19	13	36
Acts	2	37, 38	42
Rom.	1	28	10
	6	19	41
	8	35, *&c.*	296
	9	20	481
	12	11, 12	594
	15	19	498
1 *Cor.*	3	16, 17	94
2 *Cor.*	8	14	265
	13	5	293
Gal.	6	10	250
Ephes.	1	13, 14	297
	4	26	394
	5	20	486
Phil.	4	18	284
1 *Thes.*	5	22	65
1 *Tim.*	4	2	10
Heb.	6	5	294
	11	1	291
	12	1	682
	13	2	257, 258
		3	249
		5	427
James	1	14	556
		27	284
	5	16	681
1 *Pet.*	4	14	483
2 *Pet.*	1	4	499
		10	298

An

A.

Account with God daily. 366.573.
Activity in Duty, what it is. 493.494
Admonition. 175
Admiration of Christ. 195
Adversity a season, to exercise trust in God. 442
Affection to the world, to be mortified. 359

Afflictions.

Their benefit. 450
Their necessity and design. 368
We must thank God for them. 478
Why they are good and thank-worthy. 489,&c.
Angels how readily they serve God. 504

Anger.

How to be moderated. 394
To be avoided in reproving. 168,175
And in correction. 170

Alms.

To be given with Justice. 245
Who may not give them. 246
To be given Chearfully 247
With Simplicity. 248
With compassion. 249
Seasonably. 250
Speedily. 251
Liberally. 253
Prudently. 260
Motives to Alms-doing. 269,&c.

Apostacy.

It is possible. 75,82
Danger of the least Degree. 86
Means to prevent it. 88
The miserable end of Apostates. 508

Assurance.

It may be attained. 294, &c.
It may be lost. 292
Seven Directions for attaining it. 302
Further direction. 365
Not to be expected by revelation. 291

B.

Beggars which to be relieved 261

Buying and Selling.

Rules for the management of them. 230.&c.
Part of Religious business to observe those Rules. 571
Believer. *Whether he can fall totally, and finally.* 397,&c.

C.

Calling.

Diligence to be used in it. 266
Sins of our callings. 56
Carelesness *in Prayer the way to Atheism.* 455,&c.
Catechizing necessary. 164
Caution *necessary in the best.* 83
Certainty *threefold.* 293

Charity.

Several acts of it propounded. 254
The necessity of this Grace. 263
The profit of it 287,&c.
Something to be set apart for it. 267

Christ.

How are we compleat in him. 607,&c.
He is all to believers. 605
How he is all. 615
How we may know he is so to us. 628
His Condiscention. 196
To be loved in his offices. 198
To be eyed in Prayer. 326
Our happiness, in knowing him. 616
All strength from him. 614
All acceptation. 25
Civility. *in* Conversation. 224,393

Company

Company.
The Concernment *of it.* 139,167,581
If good it quickens much. 500
Comfort.
The falseneſs of that which many give themſelves. 349
Chriſt *fills every* Condition *with it.* 613
It ariſes much from performing our duty. 340
Compaſſion.
Towards the Poor. 249
In reproving. 153
Community *of goods not neceſſary.* 259
Compliance *with ſin.* 132
Connivance *at it.* 133
Conqueſt *of it how great a benefit.* 116
Correction *of family-Perſons; how to be managed.* 173
Conflict.
To be maintained with ſin. 309
Difference between natural and ſpiritual, in ſeven Particulars. 311
Conſcience.
What it is. 3
The Object of it. 4
Offices and acts of it. 4,348
The ſleepy Conſcience, *its* Cauſes *and* Cure. 7,8,9
The ſeared Conſcience, *&c.* 9,10
The erring, &c. 11
The doubting, &c. 15
The ſcrupulous, &c. 17,18
The trembling, &c. 19
How to be acted. 56
The good to be got and kept. 21, *&c*
Motives to get it. 28
Peaceable Conſcience. 21
How to get it. 21. *&c.* 350. 363
Conſcience *will one day be awakened.* 345
When that will be. 357
Benefits of tender Conſcience. 100, 570
It will diſcover beloved ſins. 59
When Commonly *terrours of it fall upon men.* 357, *&c.*
Confeſs *eſpecially beloved ſins.* 64
Chriſtian Confidence. 422
Contentment. 446
Conviction *of ſin and miſery.* 193
Contracts and Comerce.
What juſtice required in them. 228, *&c.*
Conteſts.
How to be moderated in them. 391
Converſion.
Four Concluſions, Concerning *the nature of it.* 34, *&c.*
What a man Can *do towards it.* 39, *&c.*
This Queſtion more particularly reſolved. 42, *&c.*
Beloved ſins, the greateſt enemies of it. 69
Covetouſneſs.
Deadens the Heart. 497
D.
Debts.
Muſt ſometimes be forgiven. 256
Deſire. *When immoderate.* 382, 556
Delaies.
They are moſt dangerous. 105, 493
Diſtraction.
In Prayer threefold. 460
Cauſes of it. 461, *&c.*
Remedies againſt it 65
It Diſcovereth *beloved ſins.* 58

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Dilligence.
Must be great in a Christian. 25,494, 676,&c.681
Dominion *of sin.* 59
Doubts.
Counsels to Doubting *Christians.* 303
Afflictions must not breed Doubts. 448
Duty.
It must not be forsaken for want of Comfort. 304
To be regarded, not events. 29
E.
Ease.
It accompanies sensuality. 563
Education *of Children.* 161,&c.
Ill Education *dangerous.* 57
Elocation *of them.* 195
Equity.
Wherein it doth consist. 217
Rules of dealing with men, as we would be dealt with all. 220
Equal.
In many things we are all Equal. 221
Examination.
Of our selves, how necessary. 24
Example.
It hath great power. 40,136,137
Doth much quicken us. 500
Therefore give that which is good. 281
Exercise *of grace.* 101
Experience.
It should deter us from the least sin. 108
It should encourage us in good. 429
Eye.
What meant by right Eye. 48,49.
The Excellency of the Eye. 51
F.
Faith. *Necessity of it.* 211
Power of it 68
Degrees of it. 291
It's Maxims. 447,&c.
We may know that we have it 285
Faithfulness *of God.* 428
Fear, *Of it's inordinacy* 386
Falls.
Four degrees of Gods peoples Falls. 75, &c.
How Far they may Fall. 83,84
Whether totally & Finally. 295,296, &c.
Falls *of the wicked.* 78
Mixt Falls. 79
Difference between the Falls *of Godly and Wicked.* 87
Family *sins* 145
Family *Instructions.* 163
Family *Duties.* 170
Faults.
How to bear with others Faults. 393
How to correct them. 172
Fight.
Against sin, how to be managed. 315
Flesh.
What meant by Flesh *and Spirit.* 92
G.
God.
Always justified by Good *men.* 447
Why he doth not hinder sin. 135
How he is manifested to us. 409,410
We must not limit him. 444
He can do no wrong. 447
His Goodness. 26,332,413,427
His justice in punishing. 142
His power. 426
Good. *Moral* Good *and evil eternally, distinguished.* 97
Grace *all from Christ.* 671
Growth *in it* 502
Truth of it, not dayes to be examined. p. 303.

Gentleneſs.
To be obſerved in Reproof. 176
H.
Hand.
What meant by right Hand 48,49
Excellency of it. 51
Heart.
Muſt be narrowly watched. 66,101, 133
And much laboured withall. 676
Health *the proper time for working out Salvation.* 127
Holineſs *is communicative.* 282
Chriſt the pattern of it, 32
Hope.
Nature of that Chriſtian Grace. 422
From Creatures vain. 557
Hoſpitality. 257
Humility *the ſouls ballaſt.* 446
Makes us thrive. 25
Makes good men have the worſt thought of themſelves. 655
Hypocriſie *what it is.* 649
Why compared to leaven. ibid.
Danger of it. 658
Six ſigns of it 658, *&c.*
How to cure it. 663,664, *&c.*
Motives to uſe thoſe means. 667
I.
Impatience. 444
Inconſtancy *in all things.* 223
Indeavours *not vain before Converſion.* 36, 37
Inequality *between men inconſiderable.* 222
Interceſſion *of Chriſt, its power.* 295
Juſtice.
An exact and eaſie Rule of it. 217
Rules for it in Trade. 230, *&c.*
Advantage muſt not be taken of mens Ignorance. 233
It muſt be mixt with Charity. 245
Gods Juſtice *in puniſhing.* 142
Injury.
How it muſt be proſecuted. 396
L.
Law. *It is ſix fold.* 308
When Lawfull *things undo us.* 554
How we may know that we abuſe them. 550, *&c.*
Do not all that is Lawfull. 234
Liberty.
What Liberty *Gods Sprit gives.* 510 *&c.*
How to deal with others in matters of Liberty. 227
Love. *It will put* Life *into us.* 498
The beſt preſervative againſt the leaſt ſin. 96
In the Will, and in the Appetite. 189
To God and Chriſt how diſtinguiſhed. 190
What is it to Love *Chriſt.* Ib.
Twelve Characters of it, 192
Do all out of Love *to God.* 25
Falſe Love. 205
Want of Love *to him the greateſt ſin.* 206, *&c.*
Brings the greateſt puniſhment. 208
Motives to Love *him.* 209, *&c.*
How to inflame our Love *to him.* 212, *&c.*
How to increaſe the flame. 215
M.
Marriage. 571
Miſery. *Of a ſinner.* 35?, *&c.*
Of thoſe that love not Chriſt. 208, 360
Miniſtery.
Difficulty of that Imployment. 126
Meditation. *Two benefits of it.* 469

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Makes the Efficacy of Ordinances continue. 674

Morning

Morning *thoughts to be observed.* 62
Mortification. *A continued Act.* 73
Mourn. *For the sins of others.* 147
Moderation. *What it is.* 374
The Rule of it. 376
In what things to be used. 380
How towards good things of this life. 381
How towards the evill. 386
Towards persons. 389
In Civill matters { *Actively.* 389 / *Passively.* 393
In Religious { *Negatively* 397 / *Positively.* 400
Reasons to inforce this duty. 404., *&c.*

N

Neighbour. *Duties towards him much to be regarded.* 236

O

Obedience.

It must be compleat. 67, 70, 71

Occasions.

Of sin to be avoided. 64, 103

Omniscience.

Of God to be believed in prayer. 322 *&c.*
His Omnipotence *also.* 324, 426

Opinions

Moderately to be contended for 400, 401
Original *sin.* 92, 112

Ordinances.

To be frequented. 171, 678
Their vertue from Christ. 613
What we must do to make their Efficacy abide. 678
What we must avoid for that end. 680

P.

Parents.

Must instruct their children. 163
They must command them to obey it. 165
Persons. *Must not be respected.* 153

Pleasure.

Pleasant *things dangerous* 65
Power *of God.* 426
No Power *to convert our selves.* 35
Threefold Power. 34
Men can do more than they do. 36

Poor.

A stock to be made for them. 266
Prayer, *Necessity of it.* 110
For our Relations. 181, 182
For Charity. 264
Why God hears wicked men sometimes. 328
Wicked men are bound to pray. Ibid.
Why God will not give without prayer. 333
To pray in Faith, what. 319, 321. *&c.*
How for temporal things. 337. *&c.*
How for spiritual. 338, *&c.*
To be made with an eye to Christ- 427 327
Distraction in Prayer. 460
Danger of careless thoughts in Prayer. 455, *&c.*
Answer of Prayer *makes a mercy sweeter* 485
Do nothing but what you can pray God to bless. 32
Praise *Incourages to do well.* 173

Prosperity.

A time for Trust in God. 431
How it must be done. 432, *&c.*

Propriety.

In Goods and Lands Lawful. 259

Pro-

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Promiſes
To be believed in Prayer. 326
A ground of our truſt, 427
They quicken the ſoul. 499
Providence *of God.* 323, 429
Prudence *in avoiding ſufferings.* 632

Q

Quickning.
What it is to Quicken. 492
Means of ſpiritual Quickning. 496
Ten Quickning *Conſiderations.* 501. &c.

R

Raſhneſs.
In making vows to be avoided. 583
Reaſon *It muſt always govern.* 106
Rational *Arguments to be uſed.* 180
Recreation, *to be moderate.* 579
Regenerate
Not without conflicts, 311
Relation.
Study to ſave our Relations. 158
Gods Relation *to us a ground of truſt.* 427
Religion.
A Chriſtians buſineſs. 565
Wherein in doth conſiſt. ib. *& ſeq.*
When it is our buſineſs. 569
How to make it ſo. 575, *&c.*
Sweetneſs of it. 576
When promoted by vows. 584, *&c.*
And how. 588
To be ſecured above all things. 630
How to preſerve it among enemies to it. 632
It bindes the duties of the ſecond Table upon us 237
How to converſe with men of a different Religion. 638, 639, *&c.*
Repentance, *when it is true.* 89
Madneſs to defer it, 19
Reproof. *Sin to be* Reproved. 147
Diſcovers beloved ſins. 60
How to manage it. 266, 269, 276, 382
Qualifications of a Reprover. 148
Of a Reproof. 151, 152, *&c.* 641.
What muſt be Reproved. 150
Win the affections of thoſe you Reprove. 280
Seaſon of Reproof *is to be marked.* 151, *&c.* 250
Reſolution *againſt beloved ſins.* 63
Revenge *not to be taken.* 235
Rewards *great incouragements.* 174
Riches *not to be confided in.* 242

S

Scruples *not to be cheriſhed.* 18
Self-Knowledge
How excellent 99, 212
To be got in Solitude. 62
And in Sufferings. 63
Self-denial *of great advantage.* 620
Salvation
Of our friends ſhould be labored. 158
Strife *about it.* 45, 46, 496, 497
Senſuality. 568
Security. 563
Sick.
Inſtruction to Sick *perſons of great advantage.* 120
How to be dealt withall. 121
The ſame method improper for all. 123
Errours which they are ſubject to. 124, 125
Sin *to be killed.* 50
Never to live again. ibid.
It is from our ſelves. 52
Uglineſs of it: 99
Why expreſſed by the parts of our body. 53
Of Beloved Sins. 54

Whence

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Whence they proceed. 55
12 *Marks to discover them.* 58, *&c.*
Nine Helps to subdue them. 63
Smallest Sins *to be avoided.* 81, 312, 315
Means against its first rising. 96, *&c.*
Take heed of beginning of Sin. 125
In our children as well as selves. 166
Eight ways of becoming guilty of other mens Sins. 131
Five devilish sins. 132
Sin *how to be cured by Revulsion.* 109
Sloth, *three-fold* 492. *Ten Remedies against Spirituall* Sloth. 496, *&c.* *Eight Questions to* Slothful *Christians.* 298
Spirit, *the witness of it.* 305, 513. *We may know that we have Gods Spirit.* 297. *What to walk in it.* 93. *When activity is from Gods Spirit.* 408, *&c.*
Superiors *must uphold their authority.* 161. *How to be reproved.* 178
Superfluities *to be cut off.* 265
Sufferings, *how prudently to be avoided* 638, *&c.* *Or courageously to be indured.* 623, *&c.*

T

Temper *of body may incline to sin.* 54, 55
Temptations, *how to be resisted.* 102, 104
Thanksgiving *due to God continually.* 472. *Specially from his children.* 473, *&c.* *The grounds of it.* 474, *&c.* *For every thing.* 476, *&c.* *For afflictions.* 478. *The reasons of that.* 479, *&c.* *How to obtain this frame of Spirit.* 483, 485, *&c.*
Thoughts, *a conscience to be made of them.* 455
Time *care to be had of it.* 567
Trouble, *inward and outward meet sometimes together,* 356. *Whence it arises,* 357, *&c.* *To live among the ungodly a great* Trouble. 625, *&c.*
Truth *not all equall.* 400
Trust *what it is to* Trust *in God.* 420 *Effects of it.* 423. *Object of* Trust. 424. *Grounds of* Trust *in God.* 425, 442.

V

Verbs. *Active* Verbs *how sometimes used.* 34
Unthankfulness, *several sorts of* Unthankfull *men* 487, 488. *The evil of this sin.* 489
Vows, *the nature of them.* 580. *Whether lawfull to make them.* 581 *When they are useful in Religion* 585, *&c.* *How they promote it.* 588, *&c.* *Danger of breaking them.* 604. *They must bear some proportion to mercies.* 605

W

Way, *A fourfold* Way. 495 [illegible]
Weakness, *very great in us unto good.* 35
Word *of God the best weapon.* 93, 107
Worldly-mindedness *hinders its operation.* 689. *Moderation in our words.* 389
Watchfulness, *necessary in doing our duty.* 504. *Against our enemies.* 41. 572
Worship, *how to conceive of God in it* 408. *&c.* *He is tender of it.* 454 *We must worship him in Christ.* 415

Z

Zeal *Consistant with Moderation.* 399

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